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PERSONAL ADVENTURES

AND

EXCURSIONS

IN

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GEORGIA, CIRCASSIA,

AND

RUSSIA.

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BY

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LIEUTENANT-COLONEL, LATELY EMPLOYED ON A SPECIAL SERVICE IN PERSIA.

COMPANION OF THE BATH; KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE TOWER AND SWORD; KNIGHT OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE CONCEPTION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PERSONAL ADVENTURES

IN

GEORGIA, CIRCASSIA,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

From the Caucasus to the Don—The Cossack Tribes.

There are feelings of regret, which on all occasions oppress and overcome the heart, on bidding adieu to scenes of past joy and gladness, with even the anticipation before us of a brighter and happier future. This picture the more particularly applies to those periods of life when, the etiquette and artificial ties of civilization in some measure laid aside, amid the wildest beauties of nature, the sports of the field, or the area of conflict, the heart

of man, free from all prejudice, holds communion with his fellow man.

That this feeling was predominant in my own mind, as four swift horses, with almost railroad speed, carried me onward in my route towards the north, may easily be conceived; but it was also prevalent at the moment, though in a lesser degree, in that of my companion, who, with all the prospect before him of the gaiety and pleasure his return to the gorgeous capital of the empire afforded, yet could not wholly repress his regret, unaccountable to himself, at leaving a country, "si barbare et si sauvage comme la Caucase." Long, long, and fixedly we both looked from the britzska, as we were whirled forward, gazing upon each now rapidly passing vale and mountain, till night with its sombre shade excluded it from our view.

Evening closed in as we reached the first post-house. I should previously mention, that we were provided with a courier's passport, the important advantages of which I shall

proceed to describe. At all stations throughout the Russian empire, a certain number of horses in high working condition are ever retained, ready at the slightest warning, and devoted to the exclusive service of the Emperor and the Imperial family, with the exception of officers and couriers travelling with despatches, or on affairs of an important Government nature, who are then especially provided with a particular passport, requiring them to be placed at their immediate disposal.

Possessed of this document, which, however, unless under these circumstances, is rarely, if ever, given even to the highest in rank and station, the traveller is saved from a host of annoyances and vexation in the course of his route, such for example as,—in those cases when horses really and truly cannot be obtained at any cost; by the avoidance of any delay upon the road, (for on the least thing occurring, the feld-jäger springs from the carriage, and, without any reference to the unmeaning ceremony of inquiry or re-

monstrance, lays about him with his whip, distributing his favours right and left with the utmost impartiality upon the shoulders of the underlings, whose duty it is to see the animals prepared); and above all, by the complete exemption it affords from the execrable impositions and exactions of almost the entire race of postmasters from one extremity of the Muscovite dominion to the other,[1]

[1] An incident of this kind once happened to a gentleman, who has since risen to the highest fame and station as a diplomatist, but who, at the time it occurred, was attached to the mission of the late Sir John Macdonald, British Minister to the Court of Persia. While travelling in the Russian empire, in the course of his journey, on arriving at a station, the postmaster declared the utter impossibility of procuring horses necessary for a relief. The traveller, who was well acquainted that the whole was an entire fabrication, at first by remonstrance, and afterwards by the usual Russian method—more *solid* arguments, endeavoured to persuade the cormorant to let him have them; but whether he did not offer enough, or the postmaster was more than usually obstinate, his efforts totally failed. The dispute had been brought to some degree of cessation for the moment, when a young Russian officer passing by at the time, and who at a glance saw how matters stood, called out in French, and continuing his walk, as if addressing some one before him, "Do not mention that I told you; but if you wish to obtain

and of which, on arriving at the very first post-house on our journey, a ludicrous, though of course an ineffectual example, was afforded me in my own person.

On reaching the station, and entering the house, I was met by the postmaster, who, observing at a glance from my dark cloak[1] and foraging-cap that I was a foreigner, at once declared there was not a single horse in the stable.

"What!" exclaimed a thundering voice

horses, you must give that fellow a sound thrashing." No sooner said than done; and his patience being by this time perfectly exhausted, the castigator, an extremely powerful athletic man, his hand being once in, while he was about it, did the thing handsomely. The prediction of his military friend was speedily verified; for on the conclusion of the reasoning so *strikingly* advanced, when the solid and persuasive had alike been wholly without effect, the horses were promptly produced, and the Englishman resumed his journey. On his arrival, however, at St. Petersburg, he found a heavy complaint awaiting him, which it cost him some trouble and difficulty to explain to the satisfaction of the authorities there. Certainly, the experiment was a dangerous one; and if successful in this instance, is yet one of which I should by no means recommend an imitation.

[1] The Russian military mantle is of a French grey colour.

behind. It came from my companion, who, till now unseen, had followed close upon my footsteps, his servant at the same time, with a grin of derision, holding up to the extortioner's wondering and terror-stricken gaze the magic and formidable document of the courier's pass, while I, with a malicious satisfaction, completed the poor wretch's annihilation, by *accidentally* slipping the manteau from my shoulders, and disclosing the epaulettes of a General Officer![1] The dénouement was perhaps as grotesque a scene as could be witnessed.

[1] The epaulettes of a Field Officer in the British Army are similar to those worn by Generals in the Russian service, officers of that grade alone being permitted to wear them, constituting, as they do, the insignia of their rank. I have previously observed, that military distinction is the ONLY superiority recognised throughout the Muscovite empire; and destitute of this, a prince or noble, whatever his wealth or family may be, is merely regarded as a private individual, upon whom neglect or indifference may be practised with impunity. Under a state of things of this nature, the power and influence of a General Officer, and the awe and respect his presence everywhere inspires, may be easily conceived. I shall have occasion to remark more fully upon this as I proceed.

"What," resumed the aide-de-camp, "no horses! If," he continued, pulling out his watch, "the carriage is not ready in two minutes, on arriving at the nearest outpost, look to a guard being sent to convey you a prisoner to the head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief!"

The postmaster scarcely staid to hear the conclusion, but, all aghast with terror, flew rather than ran like a shot through the door. Pale with anger, my companion, whose gentleness and mild demeanour I had never previously noticed to be so much disturbed, muttered "curses not loud but deep" upon the charlatan who had thus disgraced his country in the eyes of a stranger, while to myself the whole affair appeared as something so irresistibly ludicrous, that I sunk into a chair with a long and uncontrollable burst of laughter.

In less than the time specified, everything was announced as in readiness, and, bending to the ground, as remarkably mean and contemptible as he had previously shown himself

grasping and extortionate, the postmaster followed us to the carriage-door, explaining the *mistake*, and begging that it might not be reported to his disadvantage. To all his humble representations, however, he received no answer, the aide-de-camp maintaining a haughty silence; while, as for myself, in addition to my ignorance of the language, I was so choked with merriment that, had I even been so disposed, I could not have articulated a word.

For some miles after we had driven off, my companion continued in the most wrathful mood possible, and myself in convulsions of laughter, which by no means tended to lessen it. By degrees, however, both somewhat subsided; and, wishing to soothe the young Russian's irritable feelings, I mentioned that it might be expected travellers and strangers would be imposed upon in all countries, and that my own would most assuredly prove no exception to so general a rule. This consolatory assurance, that there were rascals in England as well as in Russia by degrees gra-

dually calmed the aide-de-camp's choler, and after some time he was brought to laugh at the incident himself.

The following morning I was awakened by an observation from my companion, who, with a self-satisfied smile, exclaimed, "Maintenant nous sommes en Russie." I put my head out of the carriage-window, and as quickly drew it back again with a convulsive shiver: that one view was perfectly sufficient, and it really was some time before I could muster up sufficient moral courage to hazard a second glance. When, at length, the attempt was made, what met the gaze? — but one vast, wide desert, which, like the broad Atlantic, encircled us around, save that to the rear the distant hills of the Caucasus loomed like the fast receding shore to the gaze of the seaman.

We were now on the great Russian steppes, peopled alone by the wandering tribes of the Calmuc, the black tents of whose encampments were the objects which alone presented themselves on the apparently almost trackless waste. And yet there is an interest attached

to these regions that few incidents in the world have ever surpassed, and which, if but little known and less appreciated, is more to the shame of western ignorance than the absence of historians to recount the extraordinary and eventful tale.

I allude to the mighty Exodus of the Calmuc tribes,[1] second only to that of the children of Israel under the divine will, who, towards the close of the eighteenth century, in the reign of the Empress Catherine II., worn down by the intolerable oppression and tyranny of their Russian rulers, forced their way, sabre in hand, with their wives and families — begirt by hostile forces, and each day a scene of sickening, remorseless, and sanguinary struggle—through the entire vast Muscovite empire up to the Chinese frontier, from whence, tradition asserts, they originally came, and

[1] For a full account of this most extraordinary event, the reader is referred to "Blackwood's Magazine," towards the close of the year 1837, where a clear, graphic, and powerfully-told narrative of this singular and eventful history is given.

where the scanty remnant who survived found ready favour, shelter, and protection.

What the general appearance of the Calmuc race is most of my readers are sufficiently familiar with. The form and features are essentially Chinese, but set in a far broader, more powerful, and muscular frame. Their ugliness, indeed, is perfectly repulsive: nor is the deficiency of personal attraction confined to the human species inhabiting these deserts, a similar degree being but too manifestly evident in the animal part of the creation, as the Calmuc horse is, without exception, the most gross-grained quadruped to look at that can possibly be imagined, though for lightness and swiftness he is unrivalled even by the Arab, while in strength and power he is far superior, being of an infinitely more robust and larger built frame.

Unlike the latter, however, his nature and temper is frequently inclined to be vicious; and, in some cases, the tact and cunning he displays in annoying and endeavouring to unseat his rider is somewhat original;—such, for

instance, as stopping dead short in the midst of a gallop, and then, throwing himself on the ground, rolling over in the endeavour to crush the horseman who bestrides him, who, however, is very seldom thus foiled, but, vigilantly on his guard, rarely fails to administer to his mutinous steed a lesson in discipline from his heavy whip and large iron shovel stirrups, that the animal has afterwards good occasion to remember for some time at least.

On, on we flew. How the drivers traced their way I know not, destitute as we were of either chart or compass! and in some places I did not observe even the vestige of a track to guide the carriage on its route. But onward we drove, arriving at each successive post-house, in its solitary gloom, with the horses in a perfect foam, and then again off on the instant. This continued till noon the following day, when we reached Stavrapol, the head-quarters of General Grabbé, the commander-in-chief on the line of the Konban.

Though termed and marked in the route as a town, Stavrapol is nothing more than a

standing camp, the barracks of the soldiery and the quarters of the officers alone forming the long, single street of which it is almost entirely composed, and even these wearing an appearance that the whole could be pulled down and transferred elsewhere at the slightest notice.

We drove up to a miserable auberge, denominated as an hotel, but forming the worst caricature of the very worst species of a German alehouse; and, having sent our passports to be *viséed* by the police, which is here requisite, we proceeded to pay our respects to the General-in-chief, by whom, it is almost unnecessary to state, I was received with his usual cordiality and kindness, and who insisted upon our staying this and the following day with him. As I was in no particular hurry to get forward, the invitation, which afforded me the highest pleasure, was very readily accepted. Madame la Générale was a beautiful, dark, elegant person, of, I believe, a Bessarabian Greek family.

The General is a man whose reputation as

an officer and gentleman is, I might almost say, without comparison in the Russian army. He has served throughout the whole of his career in the cavalry; and to the chivalrous valour of a Paladin he unites a quickness, sagacity, and firmness, which, coupled with moral qualities of the very highest order, has already, in his new sphere of command, been productive of the happiest results to the interests of his Imperial master.

On more than one occasion, in his rise through the service, his lofty spirit and unbending integrity has caused him to be treated with coldness and disregard; but his high-minded character and superior talents could not long remain concealed and undervalued; and few officers have ever attained his present rank and station with so well-deserved and revered a name.

One incident in his life is worth recording, though, at the period of its occurrence, such a manifestation of independence might have been productive of the most serious consequences to himself. On one occasion, while

commanding a regiment of cavalry, the corps was reviewed by a general officer, a coarse-minded and brutal being, who remarked upon every thing connected with it, during his inspection, in the bitterest and most insulting degree of depreciation.

This, though sufficiently galling to the sensitive mind of a high-spirited soldier, aware that his regiment in point of efficiency and discipline was regarded as a model throughout the service, was borne with silence and submission. Perhaps the idea of the malignancy and injustice, dictated alone by a spirit of personal hatred and envy, engendered a degree of contempt for its infliction. At length, the insulting demeanour of his superior was carried to a pitch beyond all human endurance. While the regiment was going through its manœuvres in the riding-school, it was suddenly halted, and the officers called to the front, where, before the whole of the privates, they were, one and all, from their commander downwards, reproached, in terms approaching to the highest degree of scurri-

lity and abuse, as a disgrace to the service, from their incapacity, ignorance, and carelessness. Finally, on the conclusion of the harangue, the men were dismissed, and the officers directed to form up for squad drill, the General declaring that he himself would act as their instructor.

The movement took place as he directed; but no sooner was the word given to face to the right, than Grabbé, who formed the leading file, clapped spurs to his horse, and, followed by the whole of his officers, galloped out of the place, leaving the General to his own company and meditations. For this he was deprived of his regiment, and remained unemployed for upwards of two years.

At the present period there were but few troops in Stavrapol, the whole being absent, as I have previously mentioned, on the final expedition against the mountaineers, preparatory to the whole of the forces going into winter-quarters. I had an opportunity, however, of greeting my old and valued friend, Colonel N——, the Sous Chef d'Etat-Major,

our rencontre being a source of mutual satisfaction to both.

Once more the steppes; and, in desperate bitterness of heart, I mounted the britzska, to bowl along those arid deserts; the anticipations of St. Petersburg, and its concomitant visions of balls, operas, and every description of courtly pleasure, on which my companion did not fail very largely to dilate, proving but slight prospective consolation in my present regretful mood.

The following day, we passed a small village, known by the name of Besapasna (sans danger), a jocose term applied to it, my companion informed me, in consequence of roving parties of Circassians having never yet ventured near it, from its distance to the Kouban.

We were here greeted with the remotest possible resemblance to civilization, in the appearance of a low, straggling hedge, and one or two trees, with an equal number of crows; the latter of whom, however, seemed terribly out of their element, and appeared

with a solemnity of exterior that could not have been surpassed by the most illustrious exiles of the Siberian waste. Of the animal part of the creation of this desolate region, it would be difficult to say which was the most savage—man, or beast. In point of intellect and intelligence, I should say the latter had by far the advantage, since a more uncouth set of bipeds the world never produced than those who, with a long vest of sheepskin (their only clothing, the wool turned inwards, and apparently merely torn from the body of one animal to be transferred to that of another), stood around, gazing upon the carriage, the pictures of barbarous idleness and filth, mingled with an occasional specimen of such utter and helpless drunkenness as would have caused an Englishman, or German, or native of any other country among whom that Teutonic vice is thought generally prevalent, to blush for his species.

The following day, at sunrise, we reached the town of Axie, situated on the river of that name, just at the point where it forms

a junction with that of the Don. We crossed by a long, narrow, wooden bridge; and, on opening the windows of the carriage, I was reminded of our having, during the last four and twenty hours, come upwards of two hundred and fifty miles due north, by such a cold, cutting wind, as seemed actually to freeze the very life-blood in our veins, and obliged us to take to our fur pelisses, which till now had not been thought of.

"La Russie est très forte," said my fellow-traveller, with a smile.

I growled a shivering affirmative, my thoughts reverting to the advanced picquets of the French army, under Napoleon, the soldiers of which, on crossing the frontier, in their ever-memorable and disastrous invasion, exclaimed to some of their Polish confederates: "And this *cochonerie* is what you call a country!"

Could they at that moment have foreseen the subsequent fate of that brilliant and magnificent array, the light jest of the speech would, indeed, have seemed prophetic. That

very poverty, and that very track of dreary waste, was, in the hands of Providence, the means which broke the charm of that dread being whom the world believed had, till then, chained success to the wheels of his war-chariot.

We were now in the Cossack country, and one great improvement soon became strikingly manifest; I mean, regarding the comfort, health, and cleanliness every where visible around. In the few villages, or rather hamlets, through which we had hitherto passed, the filth and squalor we had encountered actually scared me, who had never previously witnessed any thing resembling it; but its inhabitants were Russian serfs. Here, every thing was changed; and the cheerful cottages and neat gardens, on all sides presented to our view, were not more striking in their comparison with the miserable hovels we had hitherto beheld in our route, than the difference, at once marked and distinct, between the Muscovite peasant and the hardy warrior of the steppe.

The word Cossack has been converted into a variety of interpretations, but, from having passed so much time among them, I can assert, upon what I believe to be very good authority, that it is derived from the old Tartar word of "Kazak," signifying a freeman;[1] a term by no means misapplied when appropriated to them.

The country of the Don Cossacks is bounded on the westward by the Ukraine, the Calmuc Steppes and Caucasus forming its southern extremity, and the governments of Astrakhan and Voronitch, its northern and eastern boundaries. The land is an entire flat, rich in its pastoral and agricultural productions, to which, indeed, it may be said to be wholly and exclusively devoted. The soil is fertile, and productive in the extreme; and, though it is usual to term the Ukraine the granary of Russia, I much question if it possesses any

[1] I have since perused many interesting works by various authors upon Russia, the generality of whom, in reference to the word Cossack, are led to believe it implies a light horseman; the supposition, however, is erroneous.

actual superiority to the territory of the Don.

The form of government is entirely distinct from that of the Russian, and may be said to be based upon the old feudal system formerly existing in Europe.

For a long series of years completely independent, and then subject in succession to the Russian, the Tartar, and the Pole, they at length formally incorporated themselves under the protection of the sway of the former, the beginning of the 18th century, during the reign of the Empress Anne, but retaining their own primitive laws and customs to the fullest extent.

Totally exempt from taxes, and all other burdens, while acknowledging the Emperor their sovereign, their fealty and homage is rendered by military service alone; and he may be said to be thus, in some measure, the head of a nation of soldiers, since the entire male population, from the ages of fifteen to fifty, are by law obliged to attend his summons to the field.

The nature of their service and enlistment is similar to that of the irregular horse in India, each man providing himself with horse, arms, and accoutrements. The Cossacks may be said to form the right arm of a Russian army; indeed, it would be difficult to say what a Muscovite force could do without them, accustomed as they are to take the duties of the outposts and picquets, and on whom devolve nearly the whole of the entire service of the light cavalry during a campaign, and in the performance of which they cannot be excelled—cutting off convoys, intercepting information, and darting into the very camp of their enemy, sabreing and spearing his sentries, and harassing and wearing out the life and spirit of their foe by constant night-watching and sleepless toil.

Woe to the retreating force with the Cossack on its trail; fierce, unrelenting, savage, and cruel, mercy in their estimation is only viewed as folly and weakness; and well, indeed, might the paralyzed and exhausted French soldiery, in the disastrous retreat from

Moscow, welcome the approach of the regular Russian troops, to whom they might surrender as prisoners of war — all appeals to the clemency of their confederates, the warriors of the desert, being invariably answered by the thrust of a lance or a shot from the carabine or pistol.

Sickened and wearied with the hideous scenes of slaughter which followed the rear of the invading forces, Murat demanded an interview with Milaradowitch, the Bayard of the North, and, remonstrating upon the system of carnage so relentlessly followed up, declared it to be without parallel in barbarity since the creation of the world!

Sternly and silently for a moment the Russian Commander regarded his gallant foe, and then, a smile of concentrated bitterness wreathing his lips as he spoke, he said, "Has nothing transpired to inform your Highness of similar scenes enacted in Spain?"

The Frenchman replied not, but, turning his horse, dashed the spurs into his side, and rode off! Was it the reminiscence of Madrid,

and the frightful atrocities committed there by his orders,[1] that drove the reproof contained in this cutting reply home to his soul?

The gallant Milaradowitch, however, as well as many other Russian Commanders, exerted every thing in their power to remedy the evil; but it was only the humane and amiable Emperor Alexander who ultimately put a stop to it, by the proffered reward of a ducat (or nine shillings) a head for every French prisoner brought alive to head-quarters.

At the period of their definitively passing under the sway of the Autocrat, the Cossack government might have been considered as of an elective nature, based upon democracy. The word "Ataman," corrupted by western Europeans into Hetman, signifies a head, or chief. In every stanitza, or village, according to its size, are a certain number of Starchines, possessing magisterial authority. This term is an Armenian one, signifying elders; but,

[1] Sir Walter Scott's Life of Napoleon; Napier's History of the Peninsular War, &c., &c., &c.

among the Cossacks, applies more to the gentry, who, with few exceptions, are alone elected to the office. From this class again are elected the Vice-Atamans, or heads of districts and towns, &c.; and so also in former days was the Grand Ataman himself: but, from the moment of their being incorporated with the Russian Empire, the Imperial Cabinet, fully alive to the value of this important nomination, reserved the right of investiture to itself.

Since then the resolution has been adopted of conferring it, whenever it was practicable, upon a member of the reigning family, the late gallant and distinguished veteran, Platoff, being the last native Cossack in whose person the office was centred. At present it rests with the young Czarewitch, the Grand Duke-héritier Alexander.

It may easily be supposed the state of things I have described has occasionally been viewed by the court of St. Petersburg with no loving eye, and more than one attempt has been made to bring the warlike inhabitants

of the Don to a state more resembling, if not altogether on a level with, the free Russian peasant.

Every effort, however, has been firmly met, signally defeated, and eventually abandoned; it being too well known that such a material was not to be played upon with impunity; and the Cossacks of the Don, however inferior they may be in some respects to other more brilliant tribes, have two most important points as a guarantee for their rights and privileges, in their vast numerical strength, and a well-established bond of union among themselves, which all the arts and subtleties in the world will find it difficult ever to sever asunder.

Again, there are two names connected with the past, the memory of which, even to this day, is not forgotten, either with the Pole or the Russian. I allude to the histories of Mazeppa and Bogdan. With every particular regarding the former the world is now familiar; the brilliant talents of two of the greatest writers of their respective periods,

Voltaire and Byron, having surrounded his career with the halo of imperishable fame. The muse of the one has sung in the style of its most mellifluous sweetness, the first sad incident of his early life, the story of his fated, fatal love, and of *her* who sacrificed all in life most dear to woman—rank, honour, and station—for the one sole idol of her heart, and whose sweet and seraph image, ever present to the mind of the savage warrior, throughout the subsequent vicissitudes of his extraordinary career, sixty years afterwards, when an outlaw and fugitive, where a few short hours previous he had been a sovereign and a prince, recurred with all youth's early freshness,[1] on the banks of that broad

[1] . . . . . Theresa's form—
Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chestnut bough,
The memory is so quick and warm;
And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
Dark as above us is the sky;

and noble river (the Borysthenes,) where the weary flight of Sweden's royal master was stayed by the prospect of shelter and repose.[1]

The historic pen of the other has entered, though not fully, into the causes which for a time rendered up the country to the Khans of the Crimea,[2] not the least among which, however, was the atrocious cruelties practised upon its inhabitants by a monarch who could civilize his people, but could not reform himself!

The episode of Bogdan the Cossack, though much less known, presents a picture of even greater interest, from the consequences which

> But through it stole a tender light,
> Like the first moonrise of midnight;
> Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
> Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
> *All* love, half languor, and half fire,
> Like saints that at the stake expire,
> * * * * * *
> I loved her *then*,—*I love her still*;
> And such as I am, love indeed
> In fierce extremes,—in *good* and *ill*.—*Mazeppa*.

[1] The retreat from Pultava.

[2] Histoire de Pierre le Grand. Par M. de Voltaire.

followed, and the horrible, fearful, and revolting nature of his career throughout. The Don Cossacks at this time were subject to the sway of Poland, in which unhappy country the tyranny of the nobles, ever remarkable through the whole period of its ill-fated history, but in this season, in particular, had risen to a pitch beyond the power of humanity to endure.

Bogdan was a small proprietor, respected, and perhaps held in a degree of estimation, by his countrymen, above his station. In consequence of a misunderstanding with his suzerain, his property was seized, himself ignominiously scourged like a serf, and his wife and two lovely daughters, having been subjected to every species of coarse brutality, died raving mad.

The man's nature was changed—hitherto he had been known only as the quiet, conciliating, and generous landholder—his purse and home ever open to the distressed, whom he was also always the first to assist by his counsel and sympathy under misfortune; but

now, fearful and ominous was the difference: he never shed a tear; not a groan was suffered to escape his breast; calm and stern, his cold, clear, bright eye, caused an inward shudder in the spectator as he gazed upon him.

He fled, and put himself at the head of a party of his countrymen, who were ripe for revolt. His efforts proved successful; and before many months had elapsed, the whole country was aroused, and he found himself at the head of a hundred thousand horsemen. *Then* commenced his revenge: castles were stormed; princes and nobles, in their robes and coronets, in bitter mockery, gibbeted on their own walls, having been compelled personally to witness the females of their families, many allied to the various royal houses of Europe, first subjected to the loathsome brutality of an infuriate soldiery, and then pitilessly murdered.[1]

During this time, Bogdan feasted his eyes, in maniac gladness, with the agonies of his

[1] Karamsin.

victims—the most atrocious of these scenes invariably taking place in his presence, and under his own superintendence. And yet, in the still hour of night, wrapped in his cloak, he would leave his camp and wander forth, followed at a distance by some faithful adherents—who, however, did not dare to intrude upon his presence—and, gazing upon vacancy, while not a sound, save a low and suppressed sob and wailing, came from him, would remain till the dawn of morning. What were his thoughts at that lone and silent period?—reverting to the past, the dishonour of his home, and the slaughter of his beauteous offspring?—or, did a transient shade of pity cross his mind in that hour of solitude for the victims (innocent as many were) of his own fearful implacability? None could tell; deep-buried and inscrutable to the human eye remained his feelings; and the morn saw him cold, calm, cruel, and pitiless as ever.

He lived to an advanced age, shot and steel alike seeming to glide harmlessly by him; and, when he died, was worn to a skeleton by the conflict, which, while it exhibited not

itself in outward appearance upon his countenance, at length slowly, but surely, destroyed the fibres of the sinewy and iron frame, which military toil and hardship had served but to fortify and strengthen.

I have spoken of the Cossack during a period of war, but in justice must not omit to mention that a nobler, more hospitable, and generous, friendly character, does not exist in time of peace. His life is exclusively pastoral and agricultural; and of the cattle reared in these plains the most remarkable is the horse, which, however inferior in blood and appearance to that bestrode by the Cossacks of the Line and the Black Sea, being small, stunted, and shaggy (a composition, in fact, presenting itself, in external form, consisting almost entirely of mane and tail), possesses a hardihood, strength, and fleetness, which renders him unrivalled for the wild guerilla warfare, in which, during a campaign, he is so exclusively engaged.

Quantities of fruit, including melons of the very finest description, are grown in the neat

and beautiful gardens by the side of the river, and a small grape, from which is made a light agreeable wine, called, after the country, by the name of Donskoi, and in taste somewhat resembling champagne.

Though in personal appearance the Cossacks of the Don are immeasurably inferior to those of the Line, whose various Sabine marriages with their Circassian neighbours have rendered that race nearly equal in manly beauty to those of Caucasian origin themselves, they have yet an active, well-made, martial form and figure, especially when placed in contrast with the heavy make and unmeaning features of the peasantry of Northern Russia. The women, too, are remarkable for their pleasing manners and personal attractions, the latter of which appear to the highest advantage arrayed in their unique and highly picturesque national costume.

I may here take a cursory glance at the generality of the Cossack tribes, who are by no means what is usually but erroneously

supposed to be, exclusively of one class and origin, but are as distinct and different as the Cossack himself is to the Muscovite serf.

They may be said, exclusive of other small tribes, such as those of the Ural, Terek, the Volga, &c. &c., to consist of five grand divisions, viz., the Don, the Ukraine, the Line, the Black Sea, and the Kirghis.

Of the first and second, from their proximity, and having for centuries occupied the countries, from which they take their name, in peace and quietude, while a period of upwards of eighty years has elapsed since they witnessed the war at their own threshold, they have so fiercely waged in other lands, the character may be said to possess no material difference.

Of the third, I have already spoken at length as the descendants of those colonies, composed of Cossacks of all tribes, which the wise and sagacious Catherine implanted in the south as a protection to her Georgian provinces; and who, while one hand grasps the plough, and the other rests upon the

pistol-but or sabre-hilt, may be said to exist in one constant scene of never-ending and sanguinary warfare.

The fourth, again, may be described as owing their present fixed position to the same astute sovereign. Whence they originally sprang it would be difficult to decide: all that is known regarding them is, that towards the middle of the eighteenth century, they were a horde of roving and ferocious banditti, of mixed Polish and Tartar origin—a scourge and pestilence to the Russian, Polish, and Turkish governments alike—at war with every man, and every man's hand against them.[1] Partly by force, and partly by the most consummate tact and judgment, the Empress induced them to settle on their present lands, where she rightly conjectured they would very quickly have enough on their hands to prevent their turning their predatory habits elsewhere. The fruits of her sagacity and policy were almost instantaneously evident: the Circassians fiercely attacked the

[1] Histoire de la Russie, &c. &c.

intruders, and then commenced that system of long and deadly border warfare, which has lasted almost without intermission up to the present period.

Of the fifth and last, it may be said that, however numerous, they cannot be classed, in point of strength and power, with the others —in the first place, from the great distance of their country, the frontiers of Siberia; and, in the second, from its population being scattered over such a vast extent of steppe and desert.

The united Cossack contingent furnished to the Imperial armies, including the regiments of the guard, may be estimated at about 100,000 men; a force, however, which in time of war could be increased to triple that amount at the slightest warning; and in a period of foreign invasion, as was the case during that of the French in 1812, a perfect myriad would rise as if by magic, to hover on the outskirts of the enemy's camp, and the flank of his line of march.

It must be borne in mind that this estimate

and description applies to the *actual* Cossack tribes only, and not to those of the Calmucs, Tartar, and Persian, &c., &c., who are generally classed by travellers under this denomination; and from which description of people a considerable amount of the Russian light and irregular cavalry is also drawn. They are divided into different pulks or regiments; and in addition to the amount I have mentioned as already embodied, a further number, consisting of about one-fifth of the force serving with the army throughout the empire, is invariably held in readiness for any emergency that might arise, to march at the shortest notice. Parties of them we repeatedly saw engaged in their military exercises under their respective leaders; but, though their activity both in arms and horsemanship was remarkable, the display they afforded was very indifferent in the estimation of my companion and myself, who were fresh with the remembrance of the wild and brilliant chivalry of the South. The straight, tight-fitting European uniform too, in which

the Imperial Government of late years have clothed them, appeared misplaced and out of character, when brought into contrast with the rich costume, at once picturesque and useful, of the Caucasus, which I have heard the greatest military historian of the day declare to be the *beau idéal* of excellence and utility, in arms, dress, and appointments, for a light trooper.

In concluding this sketch relative to the Cossack tribes, I shall revert for a moment to the military colonies, originating, as by far the greater part of them do, with their population; and the most flourishing of which are planted in the rich and fertile countries of the Don and Ukraine.[1] They are embodied in divisions, each composed of four-and-twenty squadrons, ready for immediate service; twelve squadrons of reserve; and sixteen of artisans, labourers, &c., &c. The Russian squadron is not enrolled and told off according to the system practised in the English army—it more resembles the forma-

[1] Voyages du Mareschal Marmont, Duc de Raguse, &c.

tion of the troop, and is composed of one hundred privates, officered by a captain, captain-in-second, lieutenant, and cornet. This, on a fair calculation, and allowing for casualties, makes the strength of each colony to consist of about five thousand men. These military establishments I regard as objects of the most primary and invaluable importance to Russia: the system works well, is admirably organized, and is maintained at an expense of the most trifling nature, while it furnishes a large and highly disciplined force, equipped for immediate service—of an arm, too, which generally takes some time in its training and organization.

CHAPTER II.

From the Axie and Don to Kharkhoff—The Old Chateau.

From the junction of the rivers we diverged in our route to visit the Armenian colony of Nakhsheerwan, which in former days (they themselves assert a century ago, but the exact period I could not ascertain), emigrated from the city of that name on the banks of the Araxes, during the time of one of those outbursts of bigotry and intolerant persecution on the part of its Mahomedan rulers, and by the gladly accorded permission of the Russian government settled on the spot where the town is at present situated, and have since prospered to a considerable extent. Notwithstanding, however, their long residence there, they still

retain the dress, language, and customs of their forefathers; the former being that of the Persian Armenians, and the second the Tatar-Turkish, which, as I have previously observed, is the general language throughout the whole of the north of Persia.

The colony is prettily situated, possesses a handsome church, and its community are said in no wise to differ from the general character of their race, being sober, quiet, and plodding, wholly bent upon and eager in one pursuit, that of gain.

From thence nothing worthy of any particular mention transpired till our arrival at the town of Isume, which occurred on the morning of the 30th, about an hour after daylight, and which was marked by an incident which might have been productive of some disagreeable consequences. The day was just breaking, when both my companion and myself were at once awakened by a sudden shock, which caused us both to start up. My own impression was we had come in full charge upon another carriage, or conveyance of some

kind; but, on looking round, we could see nothing, and the britzska was proceeding at its usual tearing pace. On drawing up at the post-house, however (a remarkably fine building, and looking the very picture of luxury and comfort after the miserable receptacles of a similar description we had hitherto passed), we found three of the spokes of the off hind-wheel smashed, while in addition the box of it was all but actually flattened.

The feld-jäger immediately had recourse to his usual straightforward mode of inquiry, by laying his whip over the shoulders of the driver, as, pointing out the disaster, he demanded the cause, having evidently, as well as ourselves, been fast asleep at the time of its occurrence. The fellow growled something by way of reply in what was intended to be a deprecatory tone of voice, which only elicited a still further degree of energetic, manual remonstrance from the courier, who, however, suddenly appeared to remember that thrashing the author of the mischief was not the way to repair it, the which it was necessary to

effect as speedily as possible to guard against any undue detention.

He accordingly proceeded into the town; and in a short time returned with several artisans, who, after a careful and diligent examination of the carriage, promised to set all right again in the course of four or five hours. This was very agreeable intelligence, as we had begun to experience some degree of apprehension relative to whether our stay must not have been prolonged for an equal number of days. A further pleasing incident awaited us, in finding that the soldier in charge of the post-house had served in the Army of Occupation in France in 1814, where he had turned his residence to good account, in acquiring a considerable proficiency in the culinary art, the benefit of which we had now the pleasure of experiencing; and, for the first time since quitting the Caucasus, we sat down to a clean, comfortable breakfast, with appetites in every way sharpened to do justice to our new friend's valuable and (to hungry travellers, at least) never-to-be-too-highly appreciated talents.

This important business despatched, we strolled through the town, which contains a very large and well-frequented market-place, and a bazaar of some extent. It was Sunday; and, as the whole population in their holiday costume were pouring out at the hour of eleven for attendance at high mass, we both entered the principal church, and remained throughout the service.

It was a handsome building in the Russo-Tartar style, and no congregation could be more devout or more attentive to their religious duties than that assembled under its roof; indeed, a devoted attachment to his faith forms a strong characteristic in the mind of the Russian peasant.

We quitted Isume shortly after mid-day, the carriage having been repaired, if not with the grace of its former appearance, at least with a strength which apparently guaranteed its standing not merely a journey to St. Petersburg, but throughout all Europe; and, with an admonitory crack over the head to the driver from the feld-jäger, as an intimation to

him of the consequences of his neglecting to guard against further breakage, we started.

On leaving the town, for the first two miles nothing could be more execrable than the road; it was literally a bed of sand, and the britzska sunk so deep, that we were obliged to get out and put our shoulders to the wheel, absolutely to force it along: it was fortunate the distance was not great, as we were pretty well tired when we reached the end of it. Half-way between the town and the next post we came across the line of march of a regiment of infantry, a remarkably fine body of men, who were *en route* to the southward. It struck me in passing they were of higher stature, and possessed a far greater degree of parade-precision in their appearance than the troops I had hitherto fallen in with in Georgia and the Caucasus; they were, however, far behind in the veteran and service-like exterior which distinguished the latter.

The next morning, at sunrise, we arrived at the city of Kharkhoff, the seat of the government of that name, on entering which, I must

confess, my first feeling was disappointment. I had been led to expect all sorts of Russo-Greco-Scythico-Tartaric churches and buildings of every description, instead of which we drove up to a handsome, comfortable hotel (this, by-the-by, *was* a source of some, perhaps not a little, degree of satisfaction), with several fine buildings adjoining, the whole presenting an appearance similar to what might have been expected on entering a city in one of the German States, with the difference of a slight incident, which occurred at the moment of our arrival, and which, marking it as peculiarly Russian, consisted in the hostess, immediately on catching sight of my uniform, proceeding to a respectable family, who occupied the best suite of apartments in the house, and directing them to vacate them on the instant for the benefit of the General who had just arrived! It was only on observing the bustle occasioned by a hasty compliance with this peremptory mandate, and ascertaining its cause, that I was enabled to stop so arbitrary a proceeding, entailing so much annoyance

upon its occupants, by declaring that I had no occasion whatever for the rooms in question, and, even if I had, under existing circumstances, most assuredly should not take possession of them.

Though this intimation caused some degree of astonishment, every declaration of "Mon Général" was of course immediately acquiesced in; and, provided with apartments of a less showy but equally comfortable description, my companion and myself, after the luxury of a warm bath, enjoyed the further pleasure of several hours of sound repose.

Kharkhoff, in addition to being the seat of the government of that name, is the capital of the Ukraine. It is an extremely handsome, modern city, which, like Odessa and many others, have sprung up within the last half-century in the south of Russia. It contains several uncommonly fine streets and well laid-out squares, the various mansions and buildings of which are large and spacious, while two public hospitals (one for the reception of the insane), in addition to their noble exterior,

are said to be equally as well organized in their interior discipline and arrangement.

The university is said to be one of the most flourishing throughout Russia, considering the short period that has intervened since its foundation. The library is mentioned as particularly good, as well as extensive, while the system adopted towards the students is of a nature that may in some measure account for the numbers with which its colleges are invariably filled. By far the greater part of these youths are of the Cossack tribes, from all parts of the empire; those from Russia Proper being few in number in comparison.

Many of the shops and magazines are extremely handsome, presenting, to the eye of a purchaser, everything he might wish for in the bazaars or fashionable lounges of London, Paris, or Vienna; for though, like most places in the interior, but very little commerce is carried on, from the enormous expense attending its transport by land-carriage, yet, similarly to Nidjneinovogorod, there is held

at Kharkhoff an annual fair, certainly not so celebrated or so extensive as the former, but sufficiently so as to render it a similar wonder on a lesser scale, since the sales at this meeting are said to amount to upwards of a million sterling.

The following morning my fellow-traveller, not having the same locomotive propensity as myself, while rambling through one of the squares with a little boy (the son of the gentleman towards whom I had behaved so generously and disinterestedly, in not taking what of right belonged to himself! and who had volunteered to be my guide), I was suddenly accosted by a tall, fine, soldier-like looking man, about five and forty years of age, in plain clothes. There was something in his *tout ensemble* irresistibly pleasing, and while his countenance, and voice in particular, was marked with an expression and accent of the deepest sadness, his manner possessed the highest polish and most finished good-breeding.

"May I solicit the honour of knowing,

sir," he said, addressing me in French, "if you are from Saxony?"

I replied in the negative.

"You are not, then, French?" he resumed.

I answered that I was not, but an Englishman.

"English!" he said, with an air of the deepest disappointment; "and yet," he continued, after a pause, "who so ever ready as your nation to proffer sympathy and consolation to the unfortunate! I have fought, sir, against your countrymen in many a hard-contested field; but all that I have ever heard or witnessed of England, whether individually or as a nation, has but engendered feelings of esteem and respect."

We walked on together, and, as we proceeded, he related to me his history. He had served from his youth in the Lancers of the Guard of Napoleon, during which period he had been present in most of the campaigns in Spain, Germany, and France. On the fall of the great military Chieftain, he had quitted the service, despite the splendid offers held

out to him to remain by the Emperor Alexander, on the incorporation of the kingdom of Poland with the Russia Empire, and had resided chiefly abroad. On the breaking out of the late revolution he was travelling in the United States of America, from whence he hastened to return, but arrived too late to take any part in that ill-fated struggle, had he entertained any such intention, though, owing to the suspicion of the Imperial Government that such was his design, he had been ordered to proceed to, and reside at Kharkhoff, where he had ever since remained under the surveillance of the police.

We conversed together for a considerable time in the course of our ramble, and, on returning to the hotel, took a cordial farewell of each other.

The garrison of Kharkhoff consisted of four regiments of cavalry, and a similar number of infantry. One of the former, a corps of hussars, I had an opportunity of seeing on their parade; the horses were pretty fair, but, though of a larger size (to obtain which is a

desideratum throughout the entire Russian cavalry of all arms), they were much inferior in blood and spirit to those of the South. This selection of horses for their size merely is extremely detrimental to the efficiency of light horse, those of a smaller make, as, for example, the Tartar breed of the Ukraine, which in bone, strength, and muscle, are immeasurably superior, being far better adapted for this branch of the service.

We quitted Kharkhoff on the evening of the 4th, and, resuming our route, for several miles our journey lay through a track of unbounded richness and fertility, while village upon village, in addition, marked the populous nature of its neighbourhood.

Night was closing in, when my companion mentioned his disappointment that it would so shortly be dark, as in all probability we should pass, at some distance off the road, the ruins of an old château, to which a thrilling degree of interest was attached, from the circumstance of its having been, some years back, the scene of one of the most fearful domestic

tragedies perhaps ever witnessed. "Since then," continued my informant, "the family have become extinct, and the estates have passed into the hands of others; but, though so long a period has elapsed since the eventful occurrence in question took place, it has never been forgotten. As a recital of the circumstances attending it may not prove uninteresting to you, and as the narrative itself is remarkable for its singular resemblance, in some points, to an event of an equally fatal nature, which took place two centuries ago in a noble Italian family,[1] I shall be happy to give you an outline of its details.

Feeling at the time no inclination to sleep (which I trust will be the case with the reader), I very readily assented, when he at once entered upon the following version of the legend of

THE OLD CHATEAU.

It was the termination of the reign of the Empress Catherine that the building in ques-

1 The Rimini.

tion was occupied by a nobleman, the General Count de K——, to whom the surrounding estates, to a considerable extent, also belonged. At the period of his first coming to settle on his property, he was well advanced in life, and it was generally supposed three-score winters must have passed over that head, the hairs of which were white as the snows of his native land. His countenance was stern, and, though his tall, gaunt figure was bent by time, his eye retained all its wonted fire; he seldom spoke, or held communion with any one; but, when he did, it was in the fierce, abrupt, and arbitrary tone of one accustomed to be obeyed on the instant.

He came, accompanied by two children, a boy and a girl, the first then about five years old, the latter some two years younger. He was of high rank and standing in the Russian armies, and at the time of his arrival had only then vacated the command of the imperial forces on the line of the Turkish frontier.

At the period of his resignation—an event as sudden as it was unexpected — various reasons were assigned for the circumstance; but rumour in Russia, except in the capitals, has very little power of circulation, compared with öther countries, not the less, perhaps, that when it refers to the great it becomes a commodity which requires considerable caution in its management, and is very dangerous to meddle with.

Opinions, however, were rife that the chief reason lay in the sudden death of his lady,—a beautiful being, to whom he was intensely and passionately attached, (and whom he had married at an advanced period of life,)—an event which had caused such a shock to his mind that frequent aberrations of intellect, followed by fits of the deepest and moodiest melancholy, were the result.

There were, however, *other* tales, of a much more fearful nature, sometimes cautiously glanced at concerning him, which declared, as the intimate friend of Orloff, he was one, ay, and the most active, too, of

the *murderers of his Sovereign*, and, like the favourite himself, whose crime received a similar punishment, he had experienced the retribution, "delayed yet never stayed," of a just and offended Creator, in having the only being in life he ever cared for swept from the earth.[1]

And here he remained, that dark, stern, and melancholy man, a theme for awe and wonder in the minds of all around. As his children grew in years and beauty, the boy quitted the paternal roof at an early age, to enter upon his studies at the Military College at St. Petersburg, while the arrival of a Swiss governess, about the period of his departure, to take charge of the education of his daughter, caused not the slightest difference in the usual monotonous solitude of the château.

She was a very elderly, sedate, quiet

[1] Orloff married the Countess Zinoweieff, a most beautiful and amiable woman. She died suddenly a short time after the marriage, and his mind never recovered the shock. I shall again have occasion to revert to his history as I proceed.

person, to whom the secluded life she led seemed as much a matter of choice and inclination as otherwise, who quickly became very popular with the surrounding peasantry, to whom she was kind and charitable in the extrëme; and as her pupil generally accompanied her in her rounds of benevolence and charity to the sick and distressed, this feeling of good-will extended not merely to her also, but to her gloomy and misanthropic parent.

As she emerged from girlhood, at the age of eighteen, it was impossible for the imagination to conceive a being more pre-eminently lovely than the Lady Katerina. Mistress of every accomplishment, and with a seraph countenance beaming with the most angelic sweetness, to which a shade of melancholy, in her large, dark, lustrous eyes,—occasioned, in all probability, by the retired life to which, from her infancy, she had been accustomed,—lent additional attraction, her father would sit, and gaze upon her, as, seated at the instrument, she gave forth, in strains of the

richest and most liquid melody, the choicest pieces of the German and Italian composers, or warbled the simple and plaintive lays of her native land;[1] and then as suddenly rush from her presence, and shut himself up for hours and days together.

In the mean time, her brother, a bold and high-spirited youth, had entered the regiment of the Hussars of Kieff, and was universally spoken of as one of the finest and most promising young officers in that gallant and distinguished corps.[2]

I must now introduce into my narrative another character, whom I have hitherto not previously mentioned, but on whose fate much of its subsequent history hinges, and who was the foster-brother of the young Countess. I may here apprise you, that it is by no means uncommon in Russia for the

[1] Almost the whole of the Russian music partakes of this character.

[2] The Duke de Leuchtenberg, married to the Grand Duchess Marie, is now the Colonel-in-Chief of this fine regiment.

richer and higher classes to accord the benefit of the education given to their own offspring to those of others (perhaps who have been friends in early life) whose limited means do not admit of their affording their children these advantages. This boon is sometimes extended to the sons and daughters of long-tried and faithful dependants, as was the case in the present instance. An old and valued servant of the General's, who had served him from his earliest youth, and had accompanied him through all his wars and campaigns, and never once been absent from his side, in dying bequeathed his only son to the care and charge of his master, who had sent the boy to his estates two years previous to his own arrival there.

He was some few months older than the young Count, with whom he was brought up as a playfellow and humble companion, till the departure of the latter to enter upon his studies at St. Petersburg, the old priest who had the superintendence of their education having been instructed by the General to

make no distinction whatever between the two boys.

The disposition of this lad quickly became but too apparently manifest, and exhibited itself as brutal, tyrannical, and cruel, yet possessing a cunning and subtlety which enabled him most effectually to mask his real character from the observation of the residents at the château. By the serfs and vassals, on whom he seemed to find a pleasure in executing every species of petty tyranny his malignant spirit could dictate, he was hated with an intensity, which, in any other country unaccustomed to the system of Russian patience and submission, would long since have caused either his life to be sacrificed to an infuriated populace, or such representations made to his suzerain, as quickly would have insured his dismissal both from his office (for he acted as agent to the estates in the name of the Count) and the roof of his benefactor; but the fear he inspired as the son of an old and valued retainer, the generally conceived idea of his influence, and

the difficulty of obtaining any access whatever to his superior, enabled him to bid defiance to any attempt that might be made to place his character in its true light.

The first great shock of grief experienced by the young Countess was in the death of her valued and estimable friend the Governess, who, after a long and painful illness, expired in the arms of her affectionate pupil, towards whom, in her last moments, her whole thoughts seemed turned and centred, with a mixture of hope, solicitude, anxiety, and fear. Her loss was a severe one to the bereaved girl, since she was now left in almost absolute solitude, as, from her father's failing health and daily increasing gloom, which caused him to confine himself almost altogether to his chamber, to which but rarely would he allow even his daughter to be admitted, her situation might be said to be one of nearly perfect desolation.

During this time, the château was occasionally enlivened by short visits from the young Count, when on leave of absence from

his regiment. These periods, limited as they were, never failed to prove a source of joy and pleasure to his sister, who, in addition to the ardent and devoted love she entertained for her brother, invariably found every thing around partaking, as it were, of the gaiety inspired by his presence.

It was shortly after the death of her early friend that he arrived for the purpose of making a longer stay than usual; and it was generally supposed that to her his visit on this occasion proved of far higher and deeper interest, as he this time came not alone.

It would appear that the young hussar, dreading the monotony and ennui to which he would be exposed in the course of a period of residence in the country of a longer duration than ordinary, had invited a brother officer and very intimate personal friend to accompany him. Then, indeed, began a new era in the life of the Lady Katerina. Left wholly to the society of each other, for the General had now confined himself entirely to his apartments, the young people found the time pass

both swiftly and agreeably, music, the chace, and a variety of other amusements, successively occupying their attention throughout the entire period.

Rodolf Vanostrom was of a noble but impoverished Swedish family, and at an early period in life had entered the Russian service, in which he had attained the rank of Chef d'Escadron. Even in the gay and brilliant circles at St. Petersburg he was pronounced one of the handsomest men about the court; and, gifted with acquirements of the highest order, it was whispered more than one nobly born, wealthy, and high titled dame, would gladly have united her destiny to the handsome and gallant though fortuneless hussar.

But, if the fascinating attraction of his person and character was so far felt and acknowledged in the dissipated, heartless, and selfish coteries of a capital, what must its effects have been upon the mind of a young, tender, enthusiastic girl, bred up wholly in retirement, and whose knowledge of mankind till then had almost entirely been confined to

the boors among her father's serfs and vassals! The consequences may easily be anticipated: in a very short time, the heart of the young girl became completely absorbed in its new passion and feelings: she loved with all the fervid intenseness of a first, last, and only bloom; and he, the soldier and the courtier, the man of the world and of ambition, had evidently been roused to a new existence, to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and now, confessing the truth of that saying of your own bright, immortal poet,

He had knelt to many, but had loved but one,

became equally devoted to the lovely, artless, and angelic being, from whose side he was scarcely ever absent.

Time flew rapidly on, and the young men were compelled to rejoin their regiment, their leave of absence having expired. Their departure would have been a severe blow to the Lady Katerina, had not the corps been ordered to the southward, and stationed at Arol:[1]

[1] About two hundred and fifty miles distant.

both her brother and his friend were constantly enabled to obtain short furloughs from their commander.

In this manner, upwards of a year had passed. The young Count, while viewing with satisfaction the attachment which had sprung up between his sister and his brother officer, could not altogether disguise the anxiety he felt as to how the affair, when it came to be divulged, would be regarded by his father, and in what light he would be disposed to view the pretensions of a man who, however noble by birth, was a mere soldier of fortune, for his wealthy and richly-dowered daughter. He could not conceal from himself that, previous to his retirement from active life, his parent, in the general opinion of the world, had been considered a harsh, arbitrary, and ambitious man. He had now sunk into the gloomy misanthrope, and during the period of his son's residence at the château had seldom admitted him to his presence. Even then their interviews were of the briefest description, and it was always a relief to the young

soldier when this painful duty had been discharged.

On more than one occasion, the Count had brought his mind, first, distantly to allude to, and then reveal the whole history of his sister's engagement; but each time that he had determined upon doing so, an additional gloom (perhaps imaginary on his part), or a deeper cast of sternness than usual, on the General's brow, invariably caused his courage to fail him.

Thus time wore on, till at once Captain Vanostrom, in the most singular and unaccountable manner, disappeared from his regiment. He had obtained a short leave of absence for the purpose of proceeding to Moscow, as he stated, on some private business of a very urgent nature, but from whence he never returned. As he had invariably been remarkable as a diligent and active officer, rigid in the discharge of his own duties, as well as no less imperative in requiring equal attention from those under his command, his absence at first excited no surprise, it being generally

supposed he must have been taken with some sudden illness *en route* to join. When, however, days, weeks, even months, had elapsed, and no tidings reached head-quarters regarding him, his commanding-officer began to be alarmed, and a despatch was sent off to Moscow to know the cause of his absence.

And now comes the height of the mystery: as it was very soon ascertained that he not only was not there, but had never even been to the capital at all. The postmaster's books were searched, not solely on the northern route,[1] but in every other, but still no trace of him

[1] In Russia, no person can obtain post-horses without a written Government order, called a "podoroshna," which is always entered in the books of the office at every post-house on the road, and by which arrangement any missing person can always be traced to the spot where he was last heard of. It was through this system the murder of an English traveller was discovered in the South, and his assassins brought to justice. He had been absent from England many years; and his family, hearing nothing of him, and only aware that he had been last known to be *en route* towards the Crimea, applied, through the English Ambassador at St. Petersburg, for some information concerning him, and the result of which terminated in the discovery of his untimely fate.

whatever could be found. Every part of the city and its neighbourhood was next subjected to a rigid and scrutinizing search, but without avail. All hope at last came to be resigned, and nothing further, from that day to the present, was ever seen of the highly-gifted, handsome, and gallant Vanostrom.

During this period, the agonizing feelings of suspense endured by his mistress may be better conceived than described. Gradually her health faded, her spirits sunk, and, when the fatal letter arrived from her brother announcing the worst, (he had not courage to do it in person), the only tie which bound her to earth seemed to be severed asunder. A violent fever and delirium of several weeks was the result; and her father, now aroused from the gloomy reveries in which he had so long indulged, despatched messengers everywhere for the first medical assistance.

Slowly and gradually she recovered—if, indeed, a recovery it might be termed—for who, in the shadowy wreck now presented to view, would ever have recognised the bloom-

ing girl of a few short months previous? Pale—pale as marble—she moved, a spectre of her former self; and it was whispered her mind had not wholly recovered the shock it had sustained.

Almost the only person she ever saw was her foster-brother, who had now obtained the most absolute influence over her, and which (for the hatred with which he was regarded had never once diminished) was ascribed by the superstition of those around to some magic spell, as it was too often palpably evident the unfortunate lady oftentimes shook like a leaf, while her eyes glanced with maniac wildness at his approach,—the spell of the serpent, as they imagined, who has thrown the curse of his baleful influence around his victim.

But another hard and severe trial awaited the young girl, and this was the event of her father's death. Harsh, stern, and forbidding to others—even to his son—towards her, little as she had latterly seen of him, he had ever manifested the utmost tenderness, the

most devoted affection. It was said to have been a fearful spectacle, the death-bed of that fierce old warrior. Vainly he tried to meet it as became a soldier, who had scorned and defied it in many a hard-fought and bloody day; *but*, in that lone hour, the inward monitor he had hitherto crushed or disregarded *would then be heard!* Oh! it was frightful, and froze the blood of the listeners with horror to hear his shrieks and groans, now vainly trying to find relief in prayer, then giving vent to the direst blasphemies and imprecations, and again, in a phrenzy of delirium, fancying himself as of yore at the head of his forces, and the alternate shout of triumph and encouragement, mixed with orders to his staff, and various subordinate commanders, would burst in a torrent from his parched and fevered lips!

During this period, his daughter scarcely ever left his bedside for a moment, though sometimes almost paralyzed with terror at the scenes she witnessed. At length, the General gradually sunk. His last hour was evidently

drawing nigh, and his dying confession having been poured into the ear of a venerable priest, whose exhortations and prayers appeared to produce a tranquillizing effect upon the invalid's mind, with his hand resting upon the head of his beloved child, and his lips moving in inward prayer, his spirit passed away, thence to arise and stand before that dread tribunal, whence judgment will be meted out to him for those crimes, the secret of which, revealed only to his confessor, died with him.

The young Count, to whom an express had been hastily sent off on the dangerous nature of his father's illness being ascertained, arrived too late to witness his last moments, but, fortunately, reached in time to take upon himself the direction of everything belonging to his affairs, and, above all, receive charge of his unfortunate sister, who herself, it was thought for some time, could not survive her deceased parent many days.

It was about a fortnight after the General's funeral that, one night, the château was discovered to be one vast sheet of flame; and

as throughout Russia the houses are chiefly constructed of wood, notwithstanding every exertion, the pile was soon reduced to ashes, its inmates having barely time to escape for their lives. Among the first to give the alarm was the young Count himself, who, rushing to the apartments of his sister, with the help of two of the domestics, had succeeded in placing her in a temporary litter, and thus saving her from inevitable destruction. But, alas! the while, the terror of the scene had been too much for her shattered mind. She gibbered, screamed, and then, pointing as if to some fearful object near her, would piteously implore those around to remove the bodies from her sight. In short, till the final close, which occurred only about fifteen days after, she remained a confirmed lunatic, never recovering, till a few hours previous to her death, the shock she had received on that fatal night.

In the mean time every inquiry was instituted as to where and how the fire had originated, without, however, eliciting anything

leading to a discovery. But one person only had perished in the conflagration, and that was the foster-brother, whose loss no one regretted, but the appearance of whose body afterwards among the ruins occasioned a considerable degree of curiosity and wonder. The legs and arms were burnt to a cinder, but the head and trunk remained entire; and from the breast the blood welled in a large, deep, and gushing stream, as if inflicted by a heavy, broad-edged weapon. This naturally excited some remark, and gave rise to many conjectures as to how it could have been inflicted, but which ended at last in the general supposition that, while endeavouring to escape, he must have been struck by one of the sharp burning splinters, falling on all sides, which in all probability had killed him on the spot.

The remains of the young and beautiful Countess were shortly afterwards consigned to their early grave, amid the tears and sorrow of all around. In the lucid interval which occurred previous to her dissolution,

she occupied herself in the duties of religion, and in giving directions for the distribution of different sums of money towards the amelioration of the serfs and vassals on the estate. When, however, the cold earth had closed over her, and her brother had taken his departure, it was shortly afterwards sold, in consequence, it was supposed, of the feelings of the young Count rendering him both unable and unwilling to return to a spot which had been a scene of so much harrowing misery to his family, and which he never afterwards revisited.

It was about twelve years after the events previously related, when the whole of Europe, in its governments and institutions, was shaken to its very basis by the wars of Napoleon, that a Russian military officer, attached to the Imperial Embassy at Constantinople, while travelling in Greece, arrived late one night at a lone convent, not many miles distant from Athens. He was received with the utmost cordiality by the brotherhood, and, having partaken of their hospitable board,

being much fatigued, was about retiring to the chamber prepared for him, having been on horseback throughout the day since sunrise, when an old and venerable caloyer,[1] suddenly entering the refectory, begged his attendance at the couch of a dying brother, whom it was thought could not survive till the morning, and who, hearing of the arrival of a Russian officer at the monastery, implored most earnestly that he would attend him, and be witness to a confession he much wished to make before he passed away.

Though somewhat surprised at the request, the officer, of course, immediately acquiesced, and followed his guide to the cell of the invalid, which, lying in a distant part of the building, in the course of their progress the old priest, whose countenance was expressive of every placid and benevolent feeling, found time to draw an outline of some circumstances relative to the unhappy being whom they were about to visit.

"It is now some years ago," said the good

[1] Priest.

Padre, " since this stranger, one dark, stormy night, came to the convent, accompanied alone by a Greek muleteer, who served as his guide, and demanded an interview with the Prior: He spoke French, and was wholly ignorant of Italian;[1] but, fortunately, the Superior, as well as several others of the brotherhood, including myself, were familiar with that language.

" He was evidently, by his appearance, a man of rank, and one much more conversant with courts and camps than the routine of monastic life. His features were strikingly handsome, and he was still young, as his age could not exceed thirty, though, allowing for the ravages occasioned by inward suffering, (for never were the traces of mental misery of the most agonizing description engraven on any human countenance so forcibly and legibly as in the present instance,) they would have led to the belief that he was much younger.

[1] It is, perhaps, necessary to observe that Italian is the language universally spoken throughout the Levant.

"What passed between him and the Prior was never divulged; but the next morning, in presence of the whole fraternity, the stranger, who professed himself of our faith, assumed the cowl, and ever since, up to the present period, has been an object of fear and curiosity to all. He seldom spoke to any one; and, when not shut up in his cell, where he would remain sometimes for days together, without food or nourishment of any kind, and to which he entirely confined himself, would wander forth into the surrounding country, and there, also, continue from sunrise to nightfall alone.

"It was whispered that, at the period of his arrival, he had endowed the monastery with large sums of money, as the Prior issued the strictest orders that in whatever he did he was in no way to be controlled or interfered with.

"Repeatedly during his sojourn amid our walls, he has been subject to frightful fits of delirium, approaching, occasionally, to such bursts of outrageous insanity, that he has

been obliged, in more than one instance, to be bound like a wild beast. In those moments of frenzy, his ravings were of a nature that, while it caused the blood of his hearers to chill like ice, and almost paralyze them with horror, yet gave some clue to his present lorn and miserable state, in the conjecture, approaching almost to absolute certainty, of the guilt of some dreadful and hideous crime lying deep and unexpiated upon his soul.

"Two days ago he had experienced one of the most violent of these paroxysms, which had now subsided into such complete exhaustion, as gave evident symptoms of life rapidly drawing towards its final close. It was only this morning he mentioned to me his desire of confession (for, as the chirurgeon of the establishment, I have been more with him than any other member of our convent), but as yet he has delayed entering upon it, and it was only on hearing of your arrival from the lay brother who came to relieve the one who watched by his bedside, that, starting up in his couch, while his whole frame shook with

emotion, he desired me to go in search of and bring you to him, as the last act of charity to a dying man."

They had now approached the cell of the invalid, when the priest tapping gently at the door, it was opened by the lay brother in attendance, who, motioning with his finger for silence, immediately admitted them.

Slowly they approached the couch on which reclined the ill-fated tenant of the apartment, whom they supposed to be buried in profound slumber—so calm, so death-like still, he lay. The noise, however, occasioned by the tread of the armed heel of the soldier, though suppressed, had caught his attention, and he turned towards them on their entrance, as the light fell full upon the undress hussar uniform of the stranger—the effect of which upon the unhappy being before them was as awful as it was sudden and unexpected, almost paralyzing the good fathers with fright, while even their military companion stepped back a pace, as the ghastly figure before him met his view.

Starting from his recumbent position, with

a shout which it was difficult to say most resembled a laugh or a scream, he gazed for a moment deeply, earnestly, and intensely, at the well-remembered costume, and then again, sinking back, faintly articulated—"Mitrewski!" The hussar thus unexpectedly appealed to by his name sprung forward, and for some moments anxiously contemplated the wreck of human life before him. At first, his efforts were vain—no remembrance could he trace of ever having previously seen the form he beheld: but, gradually and slowly, a new light seemed to burst in upon his mind, and once the train of thought brought fully into play, conviction forced itself upon his mind, amid a whirl of bewilderment, doubt, and horror, that in the miserable being before him he beheld the remains of a former comrade and brother-officer—handsome, noble, and generous, the idol of his corps and the gayest of the gay, who, many years before, it was generally supposed, had been lost in the Adriatic, while on leave of absence from his regiment. There could be no doubt; and

though utterly unable to penetrate into the perplexing mystery before him, the feelings of old friendship and former days rushed over him, as he exclaimed, in accents of mingled pity, regret, and astonishment—"De K——!"

It was indeed the shadow of that ill-fated young nobleman, who there, in that lonely region, far distant from the land of his birth, now lay upon his bed of death; and the horrible and thrilling interest connected with whose life had never hitherto, in the remotest degree, been suspected for an instant.

There was an anxious pause of some moments, broken only by the convulsive sobs of the dying man, who, signing to the monk and the soldier to seat themselves by his bedside, requested that they alone might remain in the room.

On the departure of the lay brother, he thus addressed his former comrade:—"Providence, perhaps in compassion for all I have suffered (and, oh! what have I not, in the way of agony and remorse!) has sent you, an

early friend, to close the eyes and render earth's last duties to the regicide's son, *himself a murderer!* Start not," he continued, in a hollow but distinct voice, observing his auditors recoil with horror at this unexpected declaration—" start not, neither loathe, condemn, nor abhor me, till you have heard all—all," he said, as he threw his arms wildly upwards—" and all too that I have suffered in expiation of a father's crime; for *that* to which I was myself driven belonged in no part to my own nature, but as the offspring of a momentary madness formed part of the just retribution of the Deity, whose curse clung to, and alighted upon, the assassin's descendants. And now draw near—I must be quick—my strength may not last me to reveal the whole, for I feel myself fast sinking."

They bent over him, and the voice of the dying man, in low but distinct tones, divulged a fearful history of the past. It was a solemn, impressive scene, which that small, confined chamber afforded. The dark figure of the

venerable father in his flowing garb, and beard, white as the driven snow, descending almost to his girdle, who, with his upraised eye of mingled emotion and horror, now lifted towards heaven, was then turned with benevolent compassion upon the countenance, betokening death's rapid approach, of the unhappy being before him—the tall, martial figure of the soldier, in his military garb, his face pale, his lips quivering with emotion, as the murmured accents, now fast failing, of his dying friend and former companion in arms rang upon his ear; and, lastly, that wreck and remnant of all that was once the gay, gallant, chivalrous, and noble, whose tones of voice were now uttered with much greater difficulty—a huskiness and thick heaviness of breathing considerably impeding their utterance.

Suddenly he ceased—the recital was finished—and the priest hastened to impart the last rites of religion to the suffering penitent. As he rose from the couch, however, the hand of both the hussar and himself was

grasped by the dying man, whose eyes for a moment gleamed with preternatural brilliancy, a convulsive shiver at the same time passing through the whole of his frame; they then closed for ever—his miseries, crimes, and remorse being alike ended—he was dead!

On the following morning, the officer, having attended the remains of his early friend to the grave, resumed his journey. That convent has since been laid in ruins, in the desolating wars of the Revolution, which led to the emancipation of Greece from the yoke of the Ottoman; but in its receptacle for those who have quitted this earthly tenement, a grassy mound may still be traced, surmounted with a plain stone cross, without inscription of any kind, and which marks the last sad resting-place of all that remains of the once gay and gallant, but ill-fated and guilty, young Russian noble.

CONFESSION OF THE COUNT DE K——.

The cry of blood rises fearfully from the earth—it ascends on high, and long and dis-

tant though the period may be, too surely will a just retribution one day arrive. I rake not up the crimes of a parent, though the avenging hand of unerring fate but too clearly pointed out the regicide's, the murderer's, doom as incomplete, without the additional guilt and misery of his wretched offspring.

And yet, as you can well attest, my early life was one of gaiety and pleasure: that short-lived period, when I first joined from the Military College the Hussars of Kieff—in the revel, in the dance, in the chase, and 'mid the clash of hostile squadrons, my heart was, perhaps, the lightest of all the gifted and gallant spirits forming the members of our corps. How often, and, oh! with what bitter anguish does the remembrance of those few fleeting and joyous hours cross with a transient feeling of gladness — too quickly subsiding into those of agony and anguish—this seared, crushed, and withered heart! But the night wanes; in a few short hours more I shall be at rest; and, oh! may the remorse

and punishment I have experienced in this world prove some atonement for the crimes both of my parent and myself in that of the world to come!

I have not the courage to enter upon a description of *one*—the image of every worth and excellence upon earth—my sweet, my beautiful, my angelic sister! Bred up in such complete seclusion—revered and adored by all around, including even her stern, morose, and misanthropic sire, whose countenance in her presence frequently would exhibit signs of emotion and tenderness, perhaps never till then witnessed—she grew and flourished in innocence and loveliness, one of the fairest flowers in Nature's garden.

But for her, those periods of leave passed at the paternal mansion (so peremptorily insisted upon by its unhappy master, and yet who, whenever I arrived, would perhaps barely admit me to his presence) would have been moments in which banishment to Siberia itself would almost have been preferable; and it was to guard against the prolonged monotony

of one of these visits that I persuaded the early friend of my youth—my college companion and chosen comrade, the unfortunate Vanostrom — to accompany me; for I well knew I could venture upon such a measure, as in all probability there was not the remotest chance of my unfortunate parent ever being made acquainted even with his being under his roof.

Here let me pause an instant to reflect upon the crimes and evils which followed this apparently simple, but, as the sequel proved, fatal, fatal measure—yet, let me not anticipate. Vanostrom, as you are well aware, was the being above all others to fascinate a young and guileless heart; and the reputation for gallantry he had acquired both at Moscow and at St. Petersburg had, on more than one occasion, nearly cost him his life: yet, such is the innate power of command vested in real worth and innocence, that the gay and dissipated gallant, the bold and reckless soldier, and the plotting, scheming, ambitious man of the world, shrunk awed

and abashed before the majesty of nature in the presence of beauty, modesty, and virtue.

This feeling, however, very quickly gave place to another; and, before the expiration of a month passed in her society, the character of the duellist and the voluptuary, the admired of all admirers in the dissipated scenes of a capital, had wholly and irrevocably changed its nature, or rather had resumed its native worth and value, which the world and a long career of folly and perverted pleasure had corroded, but not destroyed, and he was completely subdued by an artless, gentle, and guileless being, whom he loved with an intenseness and fervent devotion to which he had hitherto been a stranger: such a feeling as that which now absorbed his every thought and entire being having never till now been either acknowledged or entertained, if not ridiculed and despised.

On rejoining the head-quarters of our regiment, Vanostrom's usual pursuits appeared to have lost all their attraction in his estimation: the scenes of gaiety and pleasure, of

which he had hitherto been the presiding genius, were either altogether shunned, or else entered into with a listlessness and apathy which showed how wearied and irksome they now appeared to him, while he never ceased pressing me to take advantage of every opportunity that occurred to return to the château.

I was interested in his suit, and ardently wished for its success, partly from having known him so long and intimately from our boyish days, and the knowledge of his real worth and nobleness of character, notwithstanding the follies into which, in common with us all, he had plunged and indulged in, but more particularly from my being aware how deeply and sincerely my sister returned his affection. And yet, I know not how it was, but occasionally a vague feeling of fear and anxiety, at times approaching to absolute terror, would steal over me, as I thought of my stern and misanthropic parent, and vainly endeavoured to imagine how *he* would receive the intimation of his child's engagement,

which, in his morbid and gloomy state of mind, he might be disposed to view as an act of deceit and disobedience, the worse that it had been fostered and engendered under his own roof, during a period, too, of wholly unauthorized intrusion.

Twice was I on the point of divulging the whole, but, each time that I was prepared to do so, a shade of additional gloom, and brow of deeper sternness than usual, invariably checked the words as they rose to my lips; and yet, would to God that I had braved, that I had dared all, in preference to leaving it untold, as, to this deficiency of moral courage in a great measure may be ascribed the direful consequences and scenes of misery which eventually followed!

Vanostrom, also, from a similar reason, shared my apprehensions, and was averse to its being divulged till a fitting opportunity, in his estimation, occurred for so doing. In the mean time, my father's health began visibly to decline; and I did not scruple to mention to Vanostrom that, in the event of

anything happening to him, I should immediately remove my sister to the capital, placing her in an establishment becoming her rank and fortune, to enable her to take her station in those circles of society her birth, beauty, and accomplishments rendered her so well qualified to move in and adorn. Somewhat to my surprise, while he listened to this declaration of my intentions with evident pride and gratification, a shade of mingled doubt, thoughtfulness, and anxiety was visibly depicted in his features, as he expressed his concurrence in them.

It was shortly after our again rejoining the regiment, that Vanostrom was called away by sudden and urgent business, connected with his family, to Moscow. Of that fatal and unhappy event you are well aware; from that period he was never heard of, nor could all the inquiries everywhere instituted obtain the slightest clue to his mysterious fate: it appeared as if he must have been spirited away by some supernatural agency, since, had any trace of him been left upon earth, the

police, whose efforts and vigilance were unceasing, must have alighted upon the spot.

On myself I cannot well describe the impression this unfortunate incident created. For some time, hope, faint and delusive, suggested the probability that he either was alive, or that some clue to his fate would eventually transpire; but, as time grew on, and nothing was discovered, feelings of gloom and terror occasionally convulsed my mind, as the horrid suggestion would intrude that the curse upon the regicide was commencing its work of retribution now.

During this time, I heard but once from my sister, whose letter appeared to betoken a mind almost bordering upon madness. I dared not venture upon seeing her, could I even have obtained leave for the purpose; but at this period all Europe was convulsed with the tremendous shock of the recent French Revolution; and within three months after the disappearance of Vanostrom, we received our route, and were ordered to join the army at Suwarrow.

This proved a fortunate diversion for the restoration of my harassed mind, as the hardships, dangers, and excitement of the subsequent campaigns soon drove every other thought from memory; and if, at times, the remembrance of that soft, gentle, and lovely being, whose every hope of earthly happiness I felt was crushed and withered, caused a feeling of agony and anguish within me, or that prophetic spirit of approaching evil I have previously alluded to haunted my mind with its dark and gloomy forebodings, the blast of the trumpet, with my foot in the stirrup, at once put to flight what I tried to persuade myself were the mere visionary chimeras of a morbid and diseased imagination.

Almost immediately upon our return to Russia, I was summoned to the bedside of my dying parent. I lost no time in applying for leave, which, being immediately granted, I hurried forward, travelling night and day till I reached my paternal domains. I arrived too late—the blow was already struck, and he was no more. Peace to his manes!

I found on my arrival my poor, poor sister, worn and wasted to a shadow. For this I was in a great measure prepared; the severity of the misfortune it had been her ill-fated destiny to experience would in itself have led me to expect such a result, but there was occasionally a frenzy in her bearing, and wild lustre in her eye, which, animating her sinking frame, produced a melancholy effect upon the beholder, who was led to believe it must originate in a temporary aberration of mind, the almost certain forerunner of a fixed and irrevocable insanity.

Her conversation too, during these periods, was equally singular, and sometimes even partook of a character perfectly startling: this was but too manifest during our very first interview, though, occupied with a torrent of feelings in my own heart of mingled grief and sadness, I little heeded it at the time; but, in a few days afterwards, when the last remains of our parent had been consigned to the earth, it forced itself upon my attention with equal alarm and apprehension.

But my strength fails, and I must hasten to the dénouement, by the introduction into the narrative of a villain of the deepest, blackest, and most abhorrent nature.

Yourewitch, the foster-brother of my sister and myself, exercised the office of agent to the estates in the lifetime of my late father. Almost from my first entry into the service, indistinct murmurs had reached the ears both of my sister and myself, relative to his avarice, corruption, and tyranny over the serfs; but, devoted in his attentions and protestations of fidelity to the interests of the family, the peasantry who witnessed his influence over the minds of his superiors despaired of obtaining redress, and therefore submitted to his iron rule in silent hatred and fear.

On my arrival, nothing could equal his soothing attentions; at my desire, he took everything upon himself; and a prey to grief of the deepest nature as I then was, I deemed that no recompense on my part could ever sufficiently repay his exertions and devoted service.

It was one night that, after being occupied with examining some of the papers of my deceased father till a late hour, I proceeded to my sister's apartments. Fearful of disturbing her, in the event of her having, as was most probable, retired to rest, I softly and gently opened the door of her boudoir. It was empty, but, to my utter astonishment, from the adjoining bedroom, the door of which was ajar, I heard the sound of voices, and quickly distinguished that of Yourewitch, in a tone of low but deep and imperious command, answered by the suppressed sobs of a female, who, in the most moving tones, implored his mercy.

Rooted to the spot, I gazed into the apartment in mingled amazement and horror, half doubtful at the time if I was not labouring under some frightful delirium, from which I struggled in vain to arouse myself. Seated upon a low ottoman, with her clasped hands upraised in agony towards him, was my unfortunate sister before the villain Yourewitch, who, at a short distance, gazed upon her with the cold-blooded malignity of a fiend.

"Yes," said the latter, with a menacing gesture, "the money I must and will have; your brother knows nothing of what your wants may require; and, large as the amount may appear, I think," he resumed, with a smile of triumphant malice, "it will not be misapplied in the purchase of my forbearance, considering to what one word from me would consign you!"

"For mercy — mercy," shrieked the unhappy girl, "I cannot, indeed — I cannot ask for so much; he would insist upon knowing for what purpose the money was required, and then the whole," she continued wildly, "would inevitably be discovered; but, spare me! — spare me! — spare one who never injured, but has always striven to serve you; here are my jewels, take them all—all; they will more than realize the amount you demand."

"Their sale," he replied, "could not be effected without considerable risk, and my plan is the shortest and the safest; besides, if he puts in force his present design of re-

moving you to St. Petersburg, I then lose my hold upon you perhaps for ever; you therefore, who know what your influence over him is, know also" (and this he uttered with deep and significant emphasis) "*what you are.*"

"Wretched—most wretched, but yet not guilty."

"That would be for the world to determine, when all came to be divulged," he said, with an insulting sneer; "however, the money I must have at any risk, or you know the consequences of your failure."

Slowly the unfortunate girl rose: her mind during this dialogue had evidently been giving way; and, while her eyes flashed with anger and incipient madness, she said—

"My brother is the last, the only tie which binds me to life; I will *not* do what you require, for the double reason, first, that I will not impose upon his unsuspecting generosity of disposition; and again, because my doing so would inevitably lead to his possessing that knowledge of his sister's unhappy history, which I have hitherto preserved,

with one base exception, from the whole world."

Furiously the ruffian gazed upon his victim, and then, brutally seizing her by the wrist, coarsely exclaimed—

"Dare you thus to brave me? produce what I demand, or this beloved brother shall know his sister in her true character, as a *murderess and*"—he hissed another epithet into her ear equally horrible, yet even more infamous and degrading.

He flung her from him, and she fell with violence against the ottoman.

Hitherto I had been so completely spell-bound with horror and amazement at what I had heard, so utterly paralyzed by the horrid dialogue which had passed, alluding thus distinctly, though how I was wholly at a loss to conceive, to a tale of shame and guilt on the part of her I had ever been led to venerate from my infancy as the emblem of every pure, lofty, and virtuous feeling, that at the time I was perfectly incapable of either thought or action; the last words and con-

cluding act of the brutish fiend towards his unhappy victim, however, at once concentrated every sentiment into one of deep and bursting passion of hate, fury, and revenge, which roused and goaded me into the most perfect madness.

On the table before me lay a small couteau de chasse, which I had left there in the morning on my return from a distant ride; I clutched with savage eagerness at the weapon, and, with the bound of a tiger, rushing into the apartment, sprang at the villain's throat; a faint but suppressed shriek bursting from my unhappy sister at this sudden apparition of my presence.

He possessed twice my strength; but, taken by surprise, and altogether unprepared for such an assault, while my own limbs seemed endued with herculean force, the wretch writhed and struggled in vain; it was, however, some minutes before I threw him, and only then from my never once relaxing the grasp I held upon his throat, which caused his frame to fail from the sense of suffocation it produced.

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He was now at my mercy: and, as I flung myself upon him with a fierce cry of delight, I brandished the weapon aloft, and then plunged it into his heart, again drew it back, and then again and again drove it into the now senseless and inanimate corpse, (for such it was, as life could not have survived an instant even the first mortal unerring stroke,) working it backwards and forwards in the gaping wound, with maniac wrath and impotent fury!

But this burst of madness over, a sense of the danger of the discovery of the whole, and the peril of my own situation, flashed across me. The silence, too, was frightful, and a glance which I caught of myself in a mirror opposite stiffened me with horror! I was literally streaming with blood, which, congealing upon my clothes, caused a sickening sensation to pervade me, as they tightly adhered to my own shrinking figure.

From the dead body, my attention was turned towards my poor Katerina. She was lying apparently lifeless beside the ottoman,

and for the moment I thought, and indeed half wished, her spirit too had winged its flight in the shock it had sustained. She yet breathed, however, and this rendered it the more incumbent upon some quick and effectual resolve being taken to secure us both; then it was the idea flashed across me of setting fire to the château, which, by the consuming the corpse, would, I imagined, effectually bury all connected with the past in the shade, as it was very evident from Yourewitch's own observations that he alone had been acquainted with my sister's secret, whatever that fatal secret might be.

The thought was no sooner entertained than acted upon. I dragged the wretch's body into an apartment into the centre of the building; and having hastily changed my dress, which formed such evidence of my guilt, and placed it in a position to be consumed on the instant, I lifted the insensible form of Katerina in my arms, and having wrapped her in a pelisse, and borne her to a sheltered grove at some distance from the

house, I quickly returned, and fired it in three different directions.

As the domestics lodged in a remote part of the building, I observed, with feelings of the deepest satisfaction, that, before even an alarm could be given, the greater part was consumed; but, as if the finger of Providence pointed to the deed, on the ruins being searched, the body of the hated Yourewitch was found, the greater part indeed consumed, but yet, *where the blow was struck, entire*, all gashed and gory, thus plainly intimating how he met his doom!

I shivered with dread and apprehension at the sight; but, fortunately, the general detestation in which he was held, and the universal joy at his death, caused but little remark to be made upon what, under other circumstances, would have led, perhaps, to inquiry and suspicion.

In the mean time, the reason of my poor unhappy sister never survived, till a few hours before her death, the events of that fatal night; though in the short interval

which elapsed between that period and its final and dreary, but welcome close, she imparted to me a full and ample detail of her withering secret.

It appeared that Vanostrom, whose passionate love to the unfortunate Katerina had but kept pace with her own devoted fondness and affection, in an agony of apprehension of losing her for ever, when the avowal of their mutual attachment came to be made, had, during the whole period of his last visit to the château, been exerting all the influence he possessed over her artless and ingenuous mind, to induce her to consent to a private and secret union. For a long time she resisted her lover's importunities, when my declaration of removing her to St. Petersburg, consequent upon our father's dissolution, was the indirect means of accomplishing what he desired.

Vanostrom, in common with most men towards whom the female sex have been particularly indulgent, entertained opinions not the most flattering, relative to their stability and firmness of character; it was, therefore,

with considerable dread and uneasiness that he heard me make this avowal, as he could not obliterate the idea from his jealous mind that, once introduced into the gay and animated circles of the capital, her beauty, rank, and large fortune would render her an object so much sought after by the high-titled, wealthy, and noble, that he himself would soon incur the risk of his suit being lost sight of, in comparison with other candidates of illustrious name and princely revenue.

This morbid feeling at last so completely worked upon his imagination, that one day, after urging his point without effect, with all his usual ardour and eloquence, he remarked, with considerable bitterness, that in the stirring and brilliant coteries of St. Petersburg, in the adulation and courtly flattery around her, she would soon learn to forget the fortuneless and unknown soldier.

The head of the weeping girl sank upon his shoulder at this cutting observation, as she gently reproached him for his ungenerous suspicions, while the heart of Vanostrom

himself, a moment afterwards, severely upbraided him for his selfishness and injustice; he, however, seized upon the opportunity thus offered of pressing his suit, and half yielding, half irresolute, the devoted girl was at length induced to grant a reluctant consent to his wishes.

It was then arranged that he should rejoin the regiment with me; but that, as soon as practicable, under pretext of affairs of an urgent nature requiring his presence at Moscow, he should secretly return; and, having secured the offices of a neighbouring priest, their destinies should be irrevocably united. To render the whole affair beyond the chance of any discovery, Vanostrom rode the distance, and thus prevented all prospect of his footsteps being traced.

The only person admitted to their confidence was Yourewitch, on whom they thought they could rely, and in whose presence this ill-starred union took place, and Vanostrom at length folded to his heart his blushing, blooming, and lovely bride.

It was his usual practice to remain at a distant village throughout the day, and, as evening closed in, to return to the château, and, by means of a rope-ladder, scale the walls to the apartments of his beloved. Three weeks had thus flown on the wings of love and happiness, a period to both of almost unearthly bliss, when one night—one fatal and unhappy night—the lovers were alarmed by the sound of approaching footsteps;—they came nearer, and were evidently those of a person hurrying through the corridor leading to the apartments.

Fearing their secret was discovered, Vanostrom hastily glanced around in search of some place of concealment. The only one which presented itself was a large chest, at the extremity of the room, into which he sprang, closing the lid after him, while his mistress, throwing a robe-de-chambre around her, entered the adjoining boudoir, and with a palpitating heart awaited the result of what had caused the alarm.

It proved to be a hasty summons to the

chamber of her father, who was suffering from one of those fits to which he was now almost constantly subject. She flew to the bedside of the invalid, but found, on her arrival, its first violence had already passed away, while the sufferer shortly afterwards sunk into a profound slumber, on witnessing which, she quickly returned to her own apartments, and hastened to release her husband from his irksome confinement.

On touching the spring which opened the lid of the chest, mighty God! what a hideous, ghastly, and blighting spectacle met the poor girl's distracted and agonized view! Stretched before her lay the remains of what a few short hours previous had been replete with every noble, generous, and chivalrous feeling —all that was left of what then might have been selected as a model of manly beauty— of her beloved, her adoring husband, on whose breast she had so recently reclined with all the soft, timid, and devoted affection of a first and only love, and whose form and features, now fixed and rigid, wore the frightful

aspect of having been convulsed and distorted with all the horrors of suffocation.

He was already far beyond the means of all human succour, and words are wholly incapable of expressing the desolate situation of the wretched girl, as she gazed with eyes starting from their sockets, perfectly frozen with horror, at the piteous object before her. A long and fearful swoon afforded a short respite to her miserable mind; she recovered, but again to relapse, the sight of the body bringing at once to her recollection the frightful remembrance of all that had occurred.

In this manner she passed three entire days, repeatedly driven to the very verge of insanity, by the hideous and ghastly object which formed the companion of her solitude. At length, sensible that reason could not hold much longer unless it was removed, in the frenzied delirium of desperation, she revealed the whole to Yourewitch. Even his brutal nature was startled at this dreadful catastrophe; but he at once proceeded to act with secrecy and despatch, and the same night

the remains of the unfortunate Vanostrom were consigned to their unknown, silent, and unhonoured grave.

For some short time afterwards, as the unhappy Katerina appeared rapidly sinking both in body and mind, beneath the load of misery and anguish she endured, the conduct of her foster-brother was marked by his usual respectful assiduity and attention; but his real nature soon broke forth; and, under one pretence or another, he obtained from the forlorn girl, at different periods, large sums of money: this was repeated so often, that a gentle remonstrance was offered relative to her inability to supply his frequent and extensive demands. He at first pleaded distress, then proceeded to dark and vague hints, and at length terminated in the open and declared threat that, if his extortion was not complied with, he would immediately denounce her to the authorities of the district both as the paramour and murderess of her husband!

The frantic, wretched, and desolate-stricken girl, of course, could only exert everything

in her power to obey his imperious mandate; and it is only surprising how she ever acquired strength sufficient to bear up for so long a period, without either her mind wholly sinking, or her heart breaking beneath the direful persecution she experienced.

When my father's decease, and my own contemplated removal from the country, announced to Yourewitch the cessation of his reign of tyranny, he determined upon one last and final attempt, previous to relinquishing his hold; but the immense amount he demanded, and the violence with which it was enforced, led to his own sanguinary and fatal doom—the acceleration of the fate of his hapless victim—and to myself being a murderer!

My tale is told—the hour approaches, and the rising sun will witness the final expiation of the regicide's crime, in the early doom of his son, the last of his race, the exile, and the homicide!

CHAPTER III.

From Kharkhoff to Moscow, by Koorsk, Arol, and Toola.

For a considerable distance after our departure from Kharkhoff, our route lay through a country of such unbounded richness and fertility, that it appeared as if formed by the hand of Nature not merely for the granary of Russia alone, but for the whole of Europe. Fields upon fields of the finest corn extended as far as the eye could reach, while the universal neatness and comfort everywhere visible in the surrounding cottages afforded a picture of substance and prosperity the eye loved to dwell upon.

Night had set in with a beautiful stream of moonlight as we reached the first post-house,

which, in addition to an external appearance similar to that which I have previously described as belonging to the whole of the habitations of this fertile region, possessed an equal, if not superior, degree of promise within, its interior being marked with a degree of cleanliness and order which could not be surpassed, while one part of its decorative property excited considerable surprise both in my companion and myself, and which may easily be conceived when I mention that it consisted of a series of very finely executed engravings from Shakspeare, which, suspended against the wall, were viewed with mingled pride and reverence by their proprietor, though whether this feeling originated in the reputation of the Bard, (which, by the by, I may observe is regarded with the utmost veneration throughout Russia) or the beauty of the pictures themselves, I could not ascertain.

While waiting for the relay of horses, a strain of music some thirty or forty yards distant burst upon the ear; it was the wild,

half pleasing, half melancholy ballad of the "Troika," a favourite song of the Muscovite peasantry, and on the present occasion was sung with a sweetness and melody far superior to the general execution of its performance. This vocal concert proceeded from a gipsy encampment about the distance I have mentioned from the post-house, and must have been the effusion of some five or six youthful voices conjoined in a chorus, the effect of which, in the dead silence around, was pleasing beyond measure.

We rattled on towards Koorsk, nothing occurring to disturb the rapid monotony of our route, except a slight incident partaking somewhat of a ludicrous character which happened to myself.

During our journey, I had been acquiring from my companion an occasional lesson in the Russian language, and, resolving to take an early opportunity of ascertaining the progress and efficiency of my attainments, took advantage of the slight delay occasioned by our changing horses at one of the post-houses

to inquire the name of the next stage we were approaching from a gentleman, who was standing near, attired, with the usual simplicity of his class, in a single garment of sheepskin, which, transferred from the back of the quadruped to that of the biped, (their personal difference being scarce worthy of any remark, where the natures of both were so very nearly similar) answered all the purposes of the combined articles of wearing-apparel, the inhabitants of other countries are generally (in his estimation, perhaps,) superfluously encumbered with.

The boor muttered something in reply, in a voice which appeared marvellously like a sound hovering betwixt a grunt and a growl, but the which being wholly unintelligible to my organs of hearing, I repeated the question, assuming at the same time an air of imperative authority and importance, at least equivalent to the magnitude of the information I sought to obtain.

Half bewildered with fright, the fellow repeated his gutturals, in what I suppose was

intended to represent a tone of the fullest and most distinct enunciation, and I was at length enabled to make out that he was actually expressing the name of the place I had demanded; but, saints defend me! what a term! its very harshness even was nothing in comparison with its length and strength, which, embodying consonants enough to have paralyzed even a Welchman in any effort at pronunciation, almost caused me a dislocation of the jaw merely on making the attempt.

I much regret my inability to afford a correct version of it to the reader, but if he will only school himself to the articulation of something like the following, Spzqvkhylrfxkgshyszki, he will be certain not to fall very far short of the mark!

It was a clear, bright, yet bitter cold morning, reminding us how much nearer we were getting to the north, that we reached the singularly beautiful city of Koorsk, the approach to which, forming as it does a picture which would attract the attention of the traveller in any part of the world, may be

regarded as a "perfect diamond of the desert," in a clime and country like Russia.

The city itself is situated in a valley; there are a variety of gardens and pleasure-grounds laid out, and preserved with infinite taste and care, the whole studded with innumerable villas, and presenting in its *tout ensemble* a tableau of the most pleasing and picturesque nature, heightened by the Russo-Tartaric character of the buildings of some of the churches, which possess a striking effect when placed in comparison beside the handsome modern dwellings of which the town is for the most part composed.

The streets are broad, clean, and well-paved, provided with trottoirs, and the whole exhibiting the opulence of its inhabitants, as well as the good government of its rulers. One object worthy of observation is a handsome triumphal arch; one of the many erected throughout the empire on the expulsion of the French in 1812, although the arms of the invaders never reached thus far into the Muscovite territory.

The population, as far as I could learn, consists of about 20,000 souls, at least that may be esteemed the average estimate; though on some occasions, for instance, during a brisk period of traffic, the influx of strangers caused by the event, whose stay may sometimes be prolonged for months, has generally led to the belief of its being of far greater magnitude, since, notwithstanding the great drawback I have mentioned to commercial enterprise in Russia, viz., the want of water-carriage, and the enormous expense attending the transport of merchandize by land, a considerable trade is carried on in Koorsk, equal to, if not surpassing in a comparative degree, that of any other inland city of the empire; with the exception perhaps of Moscow itself.

The bazaars are particularly handsome, and abounding in goods of every description, from the shawls of Cachemere to the bijouterie and other fancy articles of the *Magazins des Modes* in the Palais Royal. There are also several extensive manufactories for the construction of broadcloths and leather; the

produce of which has a very great and general circulation throughout the south of Russia.

The military force of the city averages about four thousand men—artillery, cavalry, and infantry, Cossacks and gens d'armes included. I had an opportunity of seeing a brigade of the infantry, who, in complete marching order, were executing a variety of field manœuvres on the *column* system.

Louis the Eleventh used to say that soldiers were a description of animal, whose hard heads were only fit to be used as anvils for swords and maces; which caustic and by no means very flattering remark, had he been living in the present day, he might with some degree of truth have applied to a Russian column. Firm, yet heavy and inert, the concentrated masses stood either steady as a wall, or moved as if some secret spring directed and controlled the limbs and bodies of the whole to a well-ordered piece of mechanism; thus affording to the beholder some proof of the justice of the observation

regarding them made by a monarch of a very different stamp, except in possessing a similar propensity to biting sarcasm and sardonic ridicule—Frederick the Great, whose general character of the Russian soldiery was, "They might be beaten, but never broken."

It must not, however, be concealed that this system, however admirable in one point of view, is equally productive of considerable evil in another. It will, perhaps, cause a regiment of a thousand men to stand a hammering from the grape and canister of an enemy's guns, that may exterminate nine-tenths of their number, the remainder still remaining firm and unshaken in their position; but it greatly deteriorates from, if not altogether destroys, any approach to energy and decision of character; as, for instance, in the case at Friedland, where some Russian columns, on that sanguinary day, formed upon the ice, maintained the combat till it was broken beneath them, and they were almost utterly exterminated by the fire of a French battery on their right; regarding which I

have heard it observed, by a distinguished French officer of high rank, recently deceased, who himself, then a young man, was present on the occasion, "That the discipline was perfect, but if there had only been a single officer to have uttered the magic words 'Fix bayonets,—charge!' the French must have been overpowered; since their united force, artillerymen, and a single weak battalion of light infantry, did not amount to a tenth part of the numerical strength of their opponents, who again, by a flank movement on their part, would have turned the position on the instant."

It was after we had performed about fifty miles of the journey subsequent to our departure from Koorsk, that I very quickly became sensible we were now within the real Muscovite dominion, or the boundaries of Russia Northern. Hitherto, the lands we had traversed had been chiefly those of the Don and the Ukraine, with the military colonies, where the system of slavery does not exist; and in those intermediate parts where it did,

the proportion of "ordnovortses," or free agriculturists, had been so great as scarcely to render it perceptible: now, however, the voyager is at once made aware, in the various villages through which he passes, that he is in a country subject to a very different rule, by observing the utter degradation of its inhabitants, and the squalor and filth, which, abounding alike in their habitations and their own persons, render them, in sloth, sullenness, and ignorance, scarcely one degree removed from the brute species. Heaven speed the exertions of those high-minded noblemen, say I, who wisely and gradually, with a disregard to self-interest, are effecting a thorough reformation in the habits and condition of the serfs on their various estates!

From Koorsk to Orel, the seat of the government of that name, we scarcely ever quitted the carriage; it being evident, as the reader may suppose, from the description already given, there was nothing to see, or any information to be obtained, during this part of our route. On one occasion only, I

ventured to approach a hut, or hovel, that possessed a somewhat better exterior than the rest; one glance within, however, was perfectly sufficient, and the odour (not of sweets) which issued from the same, at my approach, quickly caused me to wheel about, and retrace my steps to the britzska, my hands retaining a firm compression on the nasal promontory of the olfactory organs, as a precaution against all sorts of plague and pestilence, disagreeable visions of which burst upon my startled fancy.

Our stay at Orel was not prolonged beyond two days; a period, however, productive of considerable disappointment in the interest I had been led to anticipate regarding it. It is stated in the Russian official returns to be a place of considerable prosperity, with a population of upwards of thirty thousand inhabitants. If this is correct, a person would not be led to suppose it, judging from its external appearance.

It is situated on the streams of the Okha and Oorlik, the latter of which runs through it;

and the compound of villanous smells proceeding therefrom is enough to suffocate the whole of the biped species dwelling beneath its habitations. The upper part of the town contains some handsome buildings; but still, after Koorsk, they seemed to wear a dead-alive sort of look, contrasting strongly with the cheerfulness everywhere prevalent in and about the latter.

When at a distance from the city, its great extent, and the various churches and monasteries rising in the midst, give it an effect by no means unpleasing; a closer proximity, however, invariably lessens the previously-formed conceptions or expectations of the traveller on approaching it. There is a large military force stationed here; but of whom, during the short time we remained, I had only an opportunity of seeing a few detached parties.

About seventy miles from Orel we passed, at a village called Seergefskoi, a spectacle which, in my estimation, formed, if not the most interesting, at least the most pleasing

object we had hitherto fallen in with since our quitting the Caucasus, and which consisted of the park, grounds, and château of the Prince Gagarin; the whole entirely in the English style, and exhibiting a picture of splendour, opulence, and comfort surpassing anything I had yet fallen in with.

From thence to Toola but little presents itself deserving any extraordinary attention. The latter city, termed the Birmingham of Russia, merits particular observation, as the great seat of her manufactures, and the grand depôt for the construction of arms for the Imperial forces throughout the empire. Most unfortunately, however, on our arrival, we found it had scarcely begun to recover from the awful conflagration which three years previous had reduced the greater part of the city to beggary and ruin, and which, in the burnt and blackened appearance of the buildings around, presented a frightful and melancholy picture of misery and desolation.

By this most unhappy event it is asserted that, in addition to upwards of one thousand

private dwelling-houses, the greater part of the principal manufactories were destroyed, as well as several churches, the oldest in Russia, which had existed since the period of the Krim Tartars, and were regarded with the utmost veneration by its inhabitants, as the earliest temples of their worship at the period of the nation's first conversion to Christianity, on the baptism of the Czar Vladimir, and his marriage with the sister of the Greek Emperor, Basil.[1]

The prosperity of the city commenced during the reign of Peter the Great; who, either from the devotion it had invariably exhibited towards the fortunes of the house of

[1] Vladimir is erroneously supposed to have been the *first* Christian sovereign of Russia; a reference, however, to Karamsin and Gibbon will at once show that, although the first Christian Emperor, his grandmother Olga, who received the baptismal name of Helena, after the Greek Empress, was the first reigning monarch who conformed to the Christian faith. Her son Zwatislaus, notwithstanding his mother's example, proved a bigoted heathen; and even Vladimir himself, in the earlier period of his reign, imitated the tyranny and persecutions of his father towards the Christians. — Histoire de la Russie. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, &c., &c.

Romanoff, from its first accession to the throne, or, what is more probable, from the district of which it forms the capital being so rich in minerals of every description, especially in iron, was the first to establish there its infant manufactories, the vigilant protection of which has ever been attended to with the most zealous care by his successors.

It continued to increase in population and extent, the improvement in its various branches of manufactures keeping equal pace with its progressive advancement; when, by the first disastrous and destructive fire which occurred, nearly the whole fruits of the labours and industry of upwards of a century were at one blow destroyed.

The activity, energy, and liberality of the present sovereign were beginning to be productive of the most beneficial results in restoring some degree of its former prosperity, when the second event which I have mentioned, of a similar nature, again reduced it to utter ruin.

At the period of our arrival, the Govern-

ment manufactory for muskets and fire-arms of every description, for the use of the army, was the only one of any note that had been re-established; and even here, in many instances, the blackened and ruined walls remained without having been covered in at all, there being no demand for their immediate occupation.

Notwithstanding, however, this disparaging exterior, it was a pleasing spectacle to observe the cleanliness, order, and attention which prevailed, and which, everywhere remarkable throughout all the Government works and offices in Russia, forms a sad contrast to the filth and abomination of the dwellings of the lower orders of the country, and which repeatedly made me wish in bitterness of heart for the publication of an Imperial Ukase, founded on the old proverb, "that the heaviest punishment you can inflict upon a dirty person is compelling him to keep himself clean."

I have mentioned the district as abounding in mineral resources, sufficient, I have been

given to understand, to supply the manufactories of the entire city in the height of its prosperity; but the English reader, or rather the English traveller in Italy, will better understand its value, when I state that the richest domains of the celebrated and wealthy Prince Demidoff are only a short distance from Toola.[1]

A part of the hotel in which the traveller is domiciled during his stay in the city is devoted to a bazaar of fancy articles, of the workmanship so much admired in Western Europe, in which chains, rings, snuff-boxes, and other select morceaux of bijouterie, are to be purchased for one-third the price usually paid for similar articles at St. Petersburg, so very expensive even in this trifling particular is the transit of goods by land-carriage, which mode alone can be employed in Russia.

By the by, I should not omit to mention,

[1] The Prince Demidoff, whose boundless hospitality and polite attention to English visiters during his sojourn in Italy has justly caused his name to be remembered with the liveliest regard.

for the reader's information, that commercial transactions in this country are by no means conducted on the principle of the "no-abatement system" in London, or the "prix fixé" of Paris; but, on the contrary, the Eastern mode is the one more generally resorted to, the dealer commencing by demanding ten times the amount he means to take, the buyer offering an equal sum less than he intends to give.

Of this I afforded a personal example; the more mortifying to one's *amour propre*, from the circumstance that, by the experience I had gained, I was led to believe myself well upon my guard, and perfectly secure against all such little *tracasseries*. Upon being informed, therefore, of the price of a very beautiful box, I at once, with the utmost confidence, offered half the sum demanded. The fellow snapped at the offer like a cormorant, a suppressed twinkle of the eye evidently expressing his satisfaction at having caught a greenhorn at last, as he directed my attention to several other articles; but the entrance of

the aide-de-camp, who at once imparted to me the information of having been *done*, so disturbed my serene gravity of temper by such a direct blow at once upon the two most vital and sensitive points in the human mind, *vanity and the pocket*, forming provocation sufficient to have ruffled the dignity and decorum of the whole united sects of Stoics, Platonics, Socratics, and every other class of philosophic gentry, that, addressing a very strong adjuration to the proprietor's visual organs, I quitted the *boutique*.

One fine old church, situated in the principal street, still remains, having escaped the fate of the others in the general destruction, and stands a monument for reflection of bygone ages. It was the most ancient I had yet met with in the course of our progress, and possesses, in the eye of the beholder, who remembers the utterly savage state of the country at the period in which it was erected, an interest far superior to that instilled by the glittering and gorgeous domes and spires of St. Petersburg.

The morning after our departure from Toola, we reached the city of Surpookhoof, which, sixty miles from Moscow, is remarkable for being the extreme point in this direction which the invading forces reached in 1812, and which gave the first intimation to the beleaguered French of the peril of their situation, and of how completely they were cut off and surrounded.

When Napoleon at last resolved upon his ever-memorable retreat, the light cavalry were despatched in every quarter, for the purpose of procuring and laying-up forage and supplies, to transport with them for the maintenance of the army on its line of march. How everything was swept away, and the country laid waste around the doomed and ill-fated soldiery, is too well known to merit observation here; but three brigades of hussars, commanded, it is said, by Murat in person (which is by no means unlikely, from the daring nature of the act itself), passed between two divisions of the Russian Grand Army, and, penetrating as far as this city, while occupied

in collecting the objects of their advance, were discovered, surrounded, and charged home by a swarm of Cossacks and a large body of regular cavalry.

After the first crash, the conflict was almost one of hand to hand, the invaders suffering severely, great numbers, who were afterwards found disabled on the conclusion of the combat, being made prisoners. Their gallant leader, however, eventually succeeded in effecting his retreat, although after sustaining a very heavy loss; and, what was of much more importance at the time, completely failing in accomplishing the object of his daring enterprise, and that, too, at the very moment it seemed within his grasp.

Three stages from Moscow, we stopped for a short time at the village of Lapatee, the hotel of which is certainly of the queerest and most original of its kind I ever remember to have met with, and assuredly must have been built after the model of Noah's ark, or the floating-chapel of the river Thames.

It was a long, low building, extending half-

way up the street, constructed entirely of wood on the principle I have mentioned, and, from having been only recently erected, presented a whimsical spirit of uniformity both inside and out. I must not, in justice, however, omit to mention that its accommodation was excellent, and possessed (the rarest of rarities in Russia) clean beds, and every other requisite a wearied traveller could desire.

Within seven or eight miles of Moscow, the summit of a rising ground brought us in full view of the old and venerable city—a glorious, a magnificent spectacle, its various domes, minarets, spires, and palaces "towering in their pride of place," forming a mélange at once equally unique and splendid.

We stood up in the carriage, the better to gaze on the superb panorama before us — the remembrance of past ages, in their wild romance and stirring interest, enkindling feelings of the most vivid description — when a misty cloud suddenly settled over the city, and in the next instant we were soused and deluged with a perfect torrent of rain, all high-flown

ideas and sentiments being utterly lost in the howl of dismay with which, midst a whirl of hurry-scurry, tugging, pulling, and exclaiming, we shouted out to shut up the britzska; before which could be accomplished, however, we contrived to get tolerably well soaked, but the inconvenience of which, though somewhat annoying at the moment, was speedily forgotten, as I found myself domiciled in the residence of Mrs. Howard (to which I most strongly commend all travellers), in the elegance and truly *English comfort* of which I absolutely luxuriated, from the length of time which had transpired since I had witnessed anything of a similar nature.

And here I must take leave of my amiable travelling companion. I much wished to remain several weeks at Moscow before resuming my journey to St. Petersburg, while he himself was obliged to proceed on a service of a particular nature to the eastward, previous to returning to the capital. We therefore parted; but I trust that he, as well as myself, sometimes glances back upon our long journey

and previously exciting life in the Caucasus with somewhat of the pleasurable feelings which ever recur to my own mind at the reminiscence.

CHAPTER IV.

Moscow.

The first thing the morning after my arrival was, as usual, to wait upon, and report my arrival to, the General Commandant of the troops in the capital, the gallant veteran Stahl, by whom I was most warmly and politely received; my next was to select from among the numerous letters of introduction with which I was provided on parting by my friend L—— one addressed to his brother-in-law, the General commanding the Gendarmerie, and proceed with it to his residence.

He was out at the time, being engaged, I was informed, with the Prince Governor-

General; so, leaving the letter, with my address, I returned to the hotel, where, with no less surprise than satisfaction, I found another Circassian comrade, M——, of the Cuirassiers of the Guard, awaiting my return, having heard of my arrival from the Commandant, at whose residence he had called almost immediately after I had quitted it. He was now on leave of absence to visit his parents, who were among the first and wealthiest of the nobility of Moscow, and whose express commands he had to carry me off, for the purpose of being introduced and made known to their family circle.

However arbitrary the mandate, it may readily be supposed its summons was anything but disagreeable; and, accordingly, jumping into my friend's carriage, we at once drove off to the princely residence of his father; on entering which I was almost completely bewildered with surprise and pleasure at what struck upon my view.

I must, previous to proceeding further, however, mention, for the reader's informa-

tion, that at this time I had been absent from England upwards of three years, the entire period of which, including a short visit to the South of Spain and the Morea, had been passed in all sorts of wild climes and countries, amid classes of society whose doctrines and opinions, especially on the score of *meum* and *tuum*, were *somewhat* opposed to those generally entertained in European communities, and leading an equally odd and irregular sort of life; it therefore may be easily conceived what a gush of pleasurable feeling I must have experienced, when, on entering a suite of splendid drawing-rooms, it seemed almost as if by magic I was at once transplanted into the heart of London.

The style and furniture throughout all spoke of English taste and comfort — the massive and richly-ornamented harp, with two magnificent grand pianos, and several guitars, exhibited a complete picture of English elegance and accomplishment; while the music scattered around, and several superb bookcases, with some French and Italian,

contained a choice and admirable selection of the best English authors; while, to give a finishing stroke to the portrait, the master and mistress of the mansion, having advanced to welcome me to their hospitable residence, introduced me to the other members of their circle, consisting of two beautiful daughters, a young lad of fourteen, and a good old English lady, the governess of the family, under whom all its junior branches had, in their earlier days, been carefully and diligently brought up and educated, and who, now that all had sprung to man or womanhood, at the present moment in her decline of life, with age fast creeping on, found an honourable asylum, and a warm and cordial welcome, in the home where her earlier days were passed in arduous and industrious employ, revered, loved, and venerated as a second parent by its younger inmates, and regarded as a highly-cherished friend and relative by its seniors.

How might this very laudable and praiseworthy example, which is very general

throughout Russia, be in some degree imitated in *other* countries, claiming a higher degree of civilization, where the description herein portrayed presents a picture sadly and painfully the reverse!

English, of course, was the language used by all; nor could the most fastidious critic, however diligently on the watch, have detected the slightest fault, or approach to an accent, by which the nation or country of the fair linguists, and the rest of the family, could be ascertained.

What a day of agreeable reminiscence and present enjoyment! Every thought and every feeling reverted to home, as the younger sister, seating herself at the harp, in a voice of the richest and most mellifluous sweetness, which exhibited the highest degree of cultivation and skilful ability, sang "My heart's in the Highlands!"

On taking leave, I was warmly pressed on all occasions, *sans cérémonie*, to consider the house as my home during the period of my stay in the old capital; and, after a suitable

acknowledgment of so much hospitable feeling, returned to my hotel; on reaching which I found the card of General P——, Commandant of the Gendarmerie and an extremely kind note from his lady, regretting the mischance of their both being absent from home when I called in the morning, but begging I would meet them at dinner, or, if engaged, and could not join them either then or in the evening, that I would do her the favour of renewing my visit on the following day.

The General, Mrs. Howard informed me, had since been twice to learn if I had returned, and requested her to convey Madame P——'s reiterated desire to see me as early as possible.

The following morning I hastened to comply, and was most cordially welcomed, it being long since Madame P—— had heard any intelligence of her brother, and the dangerous nature of the service in which he was employed certainly afforded cause for the highest degree of anxiety; most joyfully,

therefore, were the gratifying tidings received which I was enabled to impart relative to his health and safety.

A repetition of the hospitable kindness and invitation which I had already received from the family of my friend M—— formed the sequel of my visit; and I may here take occasion to mention that the offer, made in the truest spirit of kindness, was not, as in other parts of the world, the mere *façon de parler* of common-place civility, but one proffered to the stranger from a distant land with a warm-hearted sincerity, which would have felt hurt and disappointed in its not being accepted in the fullest sense with which it was given; and in both families, up to the period of my departure, though I availed myself at all hours and all times of the license thus extended towards me, each successive day served but to mark my reception, if possible, by a still higher degree of friendly welcome!

From General P——'s, I proceeded to pay my respects to one whose urbanity, generosity,

and nobleness of mind, equalled only by high birth and station, as well as firmness, sagacity, and discrimination in his government, forms the theme of praise on every tongue alike, the noble, the soldier, the merchant, and the serf, and whose name is never even mentioned among the latter without a feeling approaching to reverence. I allude to the venerable but still hale and vigorous Prince de Galitzin, the Governor-general of Moscow.

My visit was a short one, his Highness being much occupied at the time; but he begged me to dine with him the following day, as he much wished to ascertain from me some intelligence relative to Khosrouff Meerza, whom he had known during his embassy to Russia in 1828.[1]

[1] Khosrouff Meerza, one of the younger grandsons of the late Futteh Ali, Shah of Persia, and uncle of the present Sovereign, on the death of the ill-fated M. Greybeyerdoff, Russian Ambassador to the Court of Téhèran, whom, as I have previously mentioned, was murdered with all his suite, in a popular outbreak at that capital, was despatched on a special mission to the Court of St. Petersburg, to explain the circumstances leading to this lamentable event;

The next morning, accompanied by an intelligent *valet de place*, who acted as guide, I proceeded to the Kremlin, that old and venerable pile which, though centuries upon centuries have elapsed since its first erection, yet still remains a monument of imperishable fame; to the stranger from the eventful record bequeathed in the fearful episode of the French invasion, and to the native Russian, as the revered, and almost, in his estimation, the sacred structure connected in his mind as the seat of their ancient Czars, with all the glories, triumphs, and grandeur of the Muscovite sovereigns from the remotest period.

On entering its thick, massive walls, I first proceeded to the Tower of Ivan Veliki, or John the Great; and having dragged myself

and it was during a stay of some days at Moscow, that he became acquainted with the Governor-general. The unfortunate Prince, on the death of his grandfather, was blinded, and imprisoned in the fortress of Ardebil, by order of his brother, being convicted, or what very often amounts to the same thing, *suspected* of harbouring designs inimical to his succession to the throne.

to the top (its great height, and my having been so long in a travelling carriage entitling me to make use of the phrase,) after a pull, which led me to hazard the surmise as to whether the Russian government ever compelled persons to make the ascent as a substitute for the treadmill; within a few seconds of the splendid panorama around me bursting upon view, soon lost all recollection of every thing but the grandeur and magnificent spectacle upon which I gazed.

Churches, palaces, mosques, pagodas, and pavilions, with their gorgeous and glittering domes, and golden spires, mixed with gardens, majestic trees, shrubberies, and buildings of every description of architecture, the elegant Grecian, the massive Gothic, the fantastic Chinese, and the graceful Saracenic, in the midst of which wended the noble waters of the Moskwa, all formed a tableau, which the imagination perhaps may readily conceive, but which it would be difficult for the ablest writer effectually to describe.[1] For nearly an

[1] Cathédrales, chapelles, palais, tout a été jeté là, de

hour I remained rooted and fascinated to the spot, and at length reluctantly turned away.

At the foot of the ancient tower stands an object which, if not among the most beautiful, certainly claims some degree of pre-eminence among the most singular and wonderful subjects for curiosity and observation in the capital,—I allude to the Great Bell of Moscow, which, like the tower itself, is called after the same monarch, John the Great.

This enormous mass of metal (which, as the Persians would say, stands the undisputed father and grandfather of all the bells in the world, before and since its creation), was, a short time since, by order of the indefatigable

siècle en siècle par la pensée pieuse, ou le caprice du souverain, édifié par la fantaisie de l'artiste, et tout ce mélange d'architecture religieuse et profane, de style antique et Byzantin, de flèches aigues, et de cupoles arrondies, toute cette variété de teintes et de couleurs, de façades, de clochers, produit un effet étrange, inexplicable, qui étonne comme un rêve, qui offre aux regards fascinés tantôt l'attrait d'une arabesque, tantot l'auguste aspect d'un monument consacré par le temps et par de noble souvenirs." Journal d'un Voyageur Français. Revue des Deux Mondes, Tome Premier, Treizième Annee.

Emperor, after considerable difficulty, and a period of immense labour, raised from the pit into which it was supposed to have fallen, and had lain, in all probability, from the hour of its first being constructed.

I have said supposed, having heard it questioned, even among Russians themselves, as to the possibility of its ever having been actually suspended at all, or whether the situation from which it was excavated was not the bore in which it had originally been cast.

The height of this stupendous object is rather more than twenty-feet, and from seventy to seventy-five in circumference, while the extreme thickness of the metal is scarcely half an inch short of two feet. The entrance is formed by a crack in one of the sides, large enough for the admittance of a full grown person, the when and how which occurred, at the present period, it is of course impossible to discover.

I lingered so long in the tower and the bell, that I was obliged to make all speed

back to the hotel to keep my appointment at the General-in-Chief's, where, at dinner, I had the good fortune to meet and be introduced to the gentleman exercising the office of Director and Superintendent of the Treasury, who, with the utmost politeness, himself volunteered to act in person as my cicerone, in exhibiting the vast wealth and singular curiosities of that extensive museum, for so indeed it might the more properly be termed.

The hour fixed was eleven the following morning; and, punctual to the appointed period, I presented myself at the entrance, where I found my friendly conductor already awaiting me.

The first part of the exhibition was comical enough, and consisted of all the Imperial state coaches from the earliest period that such a conveyance was first introduced into the Russian empire, some of which, in point of size, paint, gilding, and oddity of appearance, altogether rendered the venerated state carriage of the Lord Mayor of London as a

model, plain, neat, and light in comparison; indeed one, which, in point of size, resembled a moveable barrack, had a table laid down the centre, as if the conveyance had been constructed on the principle of a travelling hotellerie.

But carriages, every thing else in the world, indeed, is momentarily forgotten, on ascending, by a superb and magnificent staircase, into a suite of rooms containing what, at a first glance, appears a mélange of riches, far exceeding what the fabled narratives of the Arabian Nights, Nourjahad, and other Oriental traditions have so gorgeously and brilliantly portrayed.

The thrones of several of the most powerful and illustrious of the Czars, the most conspicuous among which are those of Ivan Veliki, Boris, and Alexius; the first of highly and curiously-wrought ivory, richly inlaid with the most costly arabesque work; while those of the two latter are composed of a mass of the most precious gems. The crowns of the various kingdoms subjugated to, or

owning the supremacy of the Russian sway, Siberia, the Cazan, Astrachan, Georgia, the Crimea, and, last, ill-fated Poland: from these, the eye turns again to sabres, poniards, pistols, all inlaid and glittering with jewels, coats of mail, armour, equally bright and resplendent, till at last, fairly sated and wearied with the dazzling splendour around, it turns and alights upon an object, which at once arrests its attention, and forms a melancholy contrast to the scene which I have described.

It is the portrait of a man in the undress uniform of a Russian General Officer, whose very handsome pleasing features, blended as they are with an expression of absolute command and authority, accustomed to the most implicit obedience, prove irresistibly attractive.

At the foot of the picture, a full length of the size of life, rests a small chest, on which are deposited two large keys, and beside it again, on either side, are placed several standards, gravel-stained, torn, faded, and bloody,

tokens of their having been the guiding star and rallying point of many and many a well-fought, hardly contested, and sanguinary day.

The portrait is that of the Emperor Alexander—the torn and trampled banners, those of an heroic, devoted, and chivalrous army, whose courage, discipline, and glory, *now* belong alone to the past—while the box at the base of the picture contains the charter and constitution of the country to which that army belonged, (laid, as their conquerors intimate to the passing traveller, at the feet of him who gave it,) deserted and unhappy Poland.

Ay, let the heart writhe and wither at the spectacle; let the spirit of self-abasement and reproach crush the soul of the Gaul and the Briton as he gazes on it.

Insult, vituperation, and the most malignant calumny have been showered upon Russia and her sovereign—and for what reason? The Muscovite and the Pole, from generation to generation, have been the open, avowed, and bitterest hereditary foes of each other from

the earliest period; is it therefore a matter of surprise that the former seized the opportunity of finally crushing and overpowering the enemy from whom she had suffered so much, and upon whom she herself had inflicted such an amount of injury, as made her aware of what would follow, should the hour of retaliation ever again arrive?

But whither had the spirit of the lion and the eagle fled? and whence originated the craven and dastardly feeling that pervaded the councils of both nations, which, while it suffered a gallant and heroic people to be crushed and overwhelmed by their powerful opponent, without striking a blow for their rescue, yet discharged every shaft of envenomed malice on the latter nation and its ruler? What verdict, also, it may be asked, will future ages return, when, in after years, it peruses the tale of this sad history? That, as far as regards Russia, ambition, necessity, perhaps, even her very safety, gave a colour of justice to the adoption of the course *she* pursued; but with France and England alone

rests the blame of her success. Their interests, their honour, every sacred tie of human nature, bound them to assist, in their desperate struggle, the last remnant of that chivalrous people, who, under their renowned and gallant Sovereign, had preserved the Christian world from the yoke of the Ottoman; but they stood tamely and listlessly by. The nationality of Poland became extinct for ever; and the Minister of that nation, for whom in former days she had sacrificed everything—her blood, her treasure—and the flower of whose soldiery fell ever in the front fighting *her* battles—the *last* who adhered with unshaken loyalty and devotion to their imperial leader in the wane of his fortunes; it was left to that same Minister, who had himself combated by their side, under the same banner, to announce the event as productive of satisfaction and congratulation to his Sovereign and country.[1] Peace to their memory.

[1] "Order reigns in Warsaw." Vide Speech of Field-Marshal Count Sebastiani, Minister of War.

But, while thus rendering justice to this ill-fated land, to her chivalrous enthusiasm and her martial fame, it must not be concealed that all her misfortunes, all her calamities, originated in her own ungovernable feuds and dissensions. Had Poland been true to herself, the combined efforts of the Confederated Powers at the period of the first coalition never could have made any impression upon her nation and government; but even in that last sad, dismal tragedy, (and what a salutary warning to other nations does the lesson convey,) treason was at work among her ranks in the very midst of the walls of her beleaguered capital, and her latest moments, embittered by her unholy and malignant party feelings, served but to accelerate her final doom.

I turned from thence into the Kremlin; and having called upon the Baron de B——, the Maréchal du Palais, to whom I had been kindly furnished with letters of introduction, by his nephew, Secretary of Legation to the Russian Mission at Téhèran, he, very kindly,

sent an intelligent guide to accompany me over the ancient palace of the Czars.

This singularly interesting and antique building was, during the period I was at Moscow, under repair, and filled with workmen of every description, it being the Emperor's wish that the whole should be completed as early as possible. The grand hall and several of the adjoining chambers were already finished, the good old Russo-Tartaric style being strictly adhered to; indeed, in my humble estimation, in no respect has the Imperial Sovereign of this vast empire exhibited such good taste and so strong a national feeling as in this preservation of character, regarded by his people almost with a feeling partaking of religious veneration, and applicable, indeed, to every building within the walls of the Kremlin, which itself may be termed a small city within the circle of a larger one, and which, there is little doubt, was originally constructed (similarly to most Asiatic capitals,) as a safeguard for the Sovereign and his court.

Its form and appearance is very irregular, the walls, which are of great height and immense strength and thickness, being jumbled together, no two sides of the same uniform length; but once within, nothing can be more beautiful: the gilded cupolas, spires, and minarets, blended with churches and convents, scattered in various tableaux, lending to the entire scene a character at once striking and imposing.

Throughout the principal court are ranges of cannon, trophies of the French invasion, and, gazing around, the spectator is almost at the moment tempted to execrate the memory of Napoleon; *not* for his ambition, the monarch's allowed pastime, in which the world alone are the players and losers—*not* for his evil destiny, which led upwards of half a million of his fellow-beings to perish amid the snows of Russia—but from the wanton and malignant spirit which induced him, on commencing his retreat, to order the destruction of the Kremlin, by undermining and blowing it into the air: a measure which, alone frustrated

by its immense strength, and utterly unproductive of any good whatever, can only be viewed as a paltry and pitiful attempt at revenge on a brave and patriotic people, who had so nobly withstood the efforts of a foreign invader to subjugate their country.

And yet, overpowering this as well as every other feeling, a far stronger one possesses the traveller—a description of awe-struck wonder, as he reflects upon the mighty genius—the master-mind of the imperial military chieftain. Too surely, and with even *more* than his usual degree of accuracy, were his calculations made; and one and all throughout the Muscovite empire admit, that had he but succeeded in maintaining himself in the capital till the spring, he *must* have succeeded.

But the mandate had gone forth; the judgment of a far higher power was interposed to strike him from the zenith of fame and eminence he had attained, and exhibit to mankind the moral lesson that, unequalled as has been his rise, his decline and fall was to prove

yet more singularly rapid. The usual period of the setting-in of winter is generally about the end of November. In this eventful year, it fell nearly *two months earlier*, and that with a rigour and severity none throughout the empire ever remember to have previously witnessed.

At Vitepsk, too, he halted; orders were issued for the army's going into winter-quarters, barracks were constructed, stores for the commissariat erected, and the termination of the campaign for that year formally announced to the troops. But his destiny led him on; and after some days of restless anxiety, as if the foreboding shadows of coming evil crossed and disturbed his mind, he at length issued the fatal order to march, but previous to its publication called a council of war of his ablest and best officers, his tried friends, and early companions in arms.

They were *one and all* opposed to his intended onward movement;[1] and, though the

[1] Sir Walter Scott, &c., &c.

Ministers and Generals of Napoleon have invariably been charged, and perhaps with justice, of being too ready on all occasions to coincide with his views and opinions, instead of offering their own, it must be confessed that this instance offered a marked exception to the usual rule, and their opposition to the measure was so universal, and, towards the conclusion of the debate, made with such obstinacy and urgent entreaty, that while it irritated and startled Napoleon, as blending ominously in unison with his own misgivings relative to the fatal issue of the enterprise, yet in no way caused the slightest deviation from his determination to advance.

One very singular piece of information has recently come to light relative to this memorable invasion, and which, though in direct opposition to the opinions previously entertained, is now very generally believed throughout Russia: I allude to the conflagration of Moscow, which it now amounts almost to a certainty was *not* the work of the Russians themselves, an assertion fully borne

out by a publication not generally known,[1] but whose author, as the Governor of the city at this period, undoubtedly ought to be considered as the first authority on the subject, and who expressly declares, in the work in question, that the burning of the city was *not* premeditated, and further, that the Government had no cognizance or knowledge of the affair in any way whatever.

It therefore may not unreasonably be as much charged to the wilful carelessness of the French themselves as the Russians; and once commenced in a city constructed at the time almost entirely of wood, the strong wind, which, according to all accounts, was blowing at the time, might at once, without the least assistance, have carried it into the heart of the city.

The amount of damage sustained by this terrible event has been variously estimated. Count Rostopchin's narrative says, that including Government buildings and offices,

[1] Histoire de l'Incendie de Moscow, par M. le Comte de Rostopchin.

upwards of thirteen thousand dwellings were destroyed! Other accounts mention full three-fourths of the entire city as having been burnt to the ground. All parties, however, agree in one point, viz., that to whatever extent the conflagration may have been carried, the loss it occasioned, in a pecuniary point of view, fell little short of ten millions sterling.

One circumstance, strongly corroborative of that part of Count Rostopchin's history, as to the fire having originated undesignedly, may be here mentioned, and which is, that on the re-entrance of the Russian forces into the abandoned capital on the retreat of the invaders, the numerous bodies of the unfortunate inhabitants, which were dug out of its ruins, afforded pretty strong evidence that this fearful calamity must at least have come upon them unawares.

Next to the ancient palace of the Czars, the building possessive of the most attractive influence is the old Cathedral of the Assumption, in which the coronation of the Empe-

rors up to the present period invariably takes place, and regarded by the inhabitants of Moscow as the holy of holies: it was founded and endowed as far back as the year 1325. The interior presents an odd mélange of paint, gilding, and mosaic, all jumbled together; indeed, the reputation of the benefice seems chiefly to lie in its being said to be possessed of several relics of the very highest sanctity. The screen, however, which guards the sanctuary, is certainly of a most superb description, being covered with solid plates of gold and platina, curiously and elaborately carved and executed; how it ever escaped the prying eyes of the French I never could understand.

From the old Cathedral I proceeded to view another curiosity, a source of attraction for all ranks, classes, and nations, to gape and stare at—I allude to the enormous gun, which is exhibited as the largest in the world. Having, however, many years in India beheld the one mid the ruins of the far-famed city of Beejapoor, which is of much greater length and magnitude, with a truly English spirit of

gratification I at once worried and annoyed two elderly gentlemen with amazingly long great coats, and almost equally long beards, who spoke a little French, by a declaration of the intelligence, and who, in return for my gratuitous information, if they did not wish me at the devil, with their lips most assuredly seemed by their expression of countenance to desire my presence any where but in Moscow.

In passing out of the Kremlin this morning, I emerged for the first time by the Sacred or Holy Gate, through which none, not even the Emperor himself, move except uncovered. On the Russians themselves there exists no necessity of impressing the remembrance of this solemn etiquette; with strangers, however, the case is different, and, as a quiet and most effectual method of admonition, the hat or head covering of the person, either through ignorance or carelessness omitting to comply with the customary formula, becomes the fee of the sentry on duty, who consequently is ever vigilantly on the alert to detect and pounce upon a defaulter.

I raised my own foraging-cap with all due reverence as I entered the gateway, and it struck me slightly, *very* slightly, that the sentinel, as he presented arms, cast a scrutinizing and half-longing glance at its embroidered binding, evidently deeming it would have been a capital prize.

Several legends are vouched for as the origin of this devotional custom, but the one most generally received and credited is, that after the last desperate and sanguinary struggle which expelled the Poles from Moscow, the bodies of the citizens and nobles who had fallen in the conflict were collected and buried on this spot.

The gates of the Kremlin are regularly locked at a stated period of the night, and, like Gibraltar, and other places where the shutting-up system is so punctually observed, when once closed, it requires something more than an "*Open, sesamé!*" to cause their being unlocked, which can only be done by application from the officer of the guard to the authorities in the fort; and as the authorities

of all nations in the world have a reasonable degree of aversion to being roused out of their beds on cold nights, (above all, Russian nights), a person whose domicile was within its walls, on being behind the prescribed time, would have the agreeable alternative before him of either seeking a lodging elsewhere, or taking up his abode till the morning in the open air.

At the period that I was at Moscow, an amusing incident was currently reported, and generally believed, as the consequence of this regulation. One cold, bitter winter's night, a sledge, containing two travellers, drove up to one of the gates of the Kremlin, which the taller of the two, in a voice of authority, desired to be immediately opened. To this demand a very short but expressive negative monosyllable was returned,—sentries being, of all animals in the world, the most averse to any description of correspondence, whether colloquial or epistolatory. The two strangers began to manifest symptoms of evident impatience at a rejoinder, to them, at least, of so unsatisfactory a nature; and the one who

had previously spoken again hailed the imperturbable grenadier, and, proclaiming himself a General Officer, desired him to comply with his mandate.

"If you are, as you declare yourself, a General, you ought to be aware of the first duty of a soldier,—obedience to his orders," was the firm and determined reply, as the soldier resumed the measured tread of his march, which the above dialogue had momentarily interrupted.

This was a poser; so, finding further argument unavailing, the travellers at least begged the sentry would exert his voice, and call up the officer of the guard. To this the man made no objection; and, after a tolerable expenditure of shouting and bawling, the guard-room being some twenty yards distant, a sleepy non-commissioned officer emerged from the building, and, learning the rank and wishes of the strangers, begged them at once to walk into the apartment of his commanding officer, till measures could be taken for a compliance with their desires.

At the first sound of the taller stranger's

voice, the young Subaltern, bounding like a shot from the couch on which he reclined, stood in an attitude of subdued and respectful attention before him, requesting to know his pleasure. The traveller smiled, and merely desired him to relieve and bring into his presence the sentry at the gate. This was quickly done, and the man entered the room at the very moment the stranger cast aside the large travelling-cloak which encircled him.

There was no mistaking that noble, that majestic figure, that broad, commanding, and magnificent brow, on which a momentary expression of impatience had given way to one of humour and benevolence. Erect as a poplar, the soldier stood before his *Sovereign*, in a desperate quandary at thus discovering who was the person he had so cavalierly repulsed, and yet with a something like consciousness that in doing so he had only strictly acted up to his duty! He had no time, however, for fear, as the Emperor, calling upon him to advance, commended his conduct in the warmest terms, ordered the sum

of a hundred silver rubles (about £40) to be paid him, and with his own hand wrote a letter to his Commanding Officer, desiring his immediate promotion to the rank of Serjeant, a requisition which, of course, it is almost needless to observe, was promptly complied with.

To account for the Emperor's apparently singular and unexpected arrival on the night in question, it may be mentioned, such is his indefatigable activity, that in the event of there existing a possibility of any important business on hand being accelerated by his presence, he has been repeatedly known, as on the present occasion, to throw himself into a sledge, or calèche, accompanied alone by a confidential member of his household; the first intimation of his doing so being his arrival at the city or seat of government in question itself!

Having been favoured with an order from the Prince, the next place I visited (and I should say one of the most striking objects worthy of observation in Moscow) was the

celebrated foundation of the Empress Catherine, " La Maison pour les Enfants Trouvés," an establishment which, in many respects resembling the Foundling Hospital of London, if half the tales I heard were true, possesses several other characteristics peculiarly its own, including sundry little episodes of masked patients, brought hither in superb equipages, and other choice morceaux of scan mag, sufficient to cause the hair of Dr. Malthus and Miss Harriet Martineau to stand on end with horror!

One thing relative to the institution, however, must not be omitted, which is, to its honour be it said, that the principles of humanity, kindness, and attention on which it is conducted towards its helpless deserted inmates, are beyond all praise. The cleanliness, admirable order, and arrangement throughout, (which, as I have previously mentioned, pervades all Government establishments in Russia,) were most praiseworthy; and nothing could present a finer picture for the eye of the philanthropist than

the various groups of chubby-looking children, of all sizes and ages, I came upon in my passage through the rooms.

The education afforded is solid and good, qualifying the female part of the community to discharge the duties of governesses in private families, and the boys for the different trades or professions to which their abilities, talents, or inclination may lead them.

The following morning I attended a review, by the General-in-Chief, of the troops quartered in the capital and its environs. They mustered two-and-thirty squadrons of Cavalry, viz., eight of Cuirassiers, eight of Lancers, and sixteen of Hussars, and ten battalions of Infantry, which, with four-and-twenty field-pieces, rendered the assembled amount in all close upon fourteen thousand men.

Through the means of my kind friend, General P——, I was superbly mounted (most fortunately, as the event subsequently proved), and was thus enabled to observe the field to the highest advantage, by falling in as one of the Prince's personal Etat-Major.

Having defiled before the General, and executed a variety of manœuvres, with a steadiness and precision which gave the entire mass the appearance of one continued, vast machine, the form and precision of the parade were partially laid aside, as one party formed up to act against the other in a species of mock conflict.

Now commenced the animation of the scene. The thunder of the guns—the rush of the horsemen upon the Infantry and against each other — the massive column, now half deployed, and then as suddenly reformed as they threw in their close and well-directed vollies on the assailing Cavalry—the tact and energy of the different Commanders, directed to prevent the flank being turned, or their rear gained, the acknowledged signal of defeat; all produced an exhilaration and excitement, the feelings of which were fully participated in by the spectators around.

In the midst of the *mêlée* I had joined a column of Cuirassiers, who were drawn up to charge a regiment of Hussars deployed in

their front. The smoke, which had till now been extremely dense, cleared off as we advanced at a brisk trot, exhibiting the line of our adversaries, whom we were surprised to observe (at least I was) seemed by no means disposed to put their horses in motion.

The mystery was very quickly explained, and that most disagreeably to our cost. The shrill blast of the trumpet had scarcely given forth the signal to gallop, than outwards wheeled the Hussars, giving us a flying volley from their carbines as they executed the manœuvre, and disclosing in their rear a phalanx of bristling steel, in the shape of a square, of at least four thousand bayonets, with guns run out at the angles, and which poured such a stream of fire into our advancing column as, had we been engaged in an "affair of business," would have sent it to shivers.

Never was the word "Threes about" rendered more utterly superfluous and unnecessary, the horses being apparently gifted by instinct as to what was the fittest and most judicious course to pursue, each wheeling

about with the velocity of lightning; the interest of the whole being considerably enhanced by the individual independence of the entire body, every animal tearing along in the manner which suited him best, amid a scene of bolting, kicking, and plunging,—riding over and against each other, and sundry little pleasantries of a similar nature, gratifying and humorous, doubtless to all, except somehow the party concerned.

Borne along in the midst of the torrent, with a hearty benediction! upon Cuirassiers, Grenadiers, Fusiliers, and "*Heavies*" of all sorts and denominations, (N.B. I have always served in the "Lights" myself,) and the ill-fortune which had led me into their ranks at such an inauspicious moment; as our files became loosened and extended, and the field dotted occasionally with huge recumbent figures in cuirasses and jack-boots, their chargers having, in the general confusion, taken the advantage of proceeding upon a short furlough; after having sustained sundry shocks and jams, which set all sorts of lights

dancing before my startled vision, and on one occasion led me to suppose had transferred by a summary process the whole of my teeth from their masticatory position to a more inland situation, I had just emerged from the crowd, when a fellow, who with his horse and himself together seemed the size of a windmill, came full but upon me.

I spurred for a dodge with all the energy of desperation (for as to meeting him I might as well have expected success in charging a house toppling from an earthquake), and he shot past my rear in the very full of time for his horse to receive in his ribs the crash of the heels of my own steed, uplifted with a tremendous snort of indignation at the sharp arguments I had the instant previous applied to his flanks.

The huge mass of man and beast reeled and staggered with the shock; but whether he recovered his footing or tumbled headlong to the earth I had no leisure to ascertain, as the animal on which I was mounted bounded forward, and had cleared the throng by some

distance, ere, panting and blowing, I could pull him up.

It has been observed, and certainly with truth, that a much greater degree of freedom of thought and opinion prevails at Moscow than in any other part of the empire, and which may perhaps be esteemed one of the causes why this capital is generally so much preferred by travellers and strangers to its Imperial rival, where in society the most guarded caution is both rendered necessary and invariably preserved.

This difference may be owing to a variety of causes, such as the greater mixture of society, the spirit and energy of commercial enterprise, which in this vast mart collects persons from all parts of the globe; and *one other* incident, above all others, which, standing as a proud record and lesson to its inhabitants, serves at once to afford the picture of a noble monument of national glory, as well as a salutary warning to the powers that govern and the governed.

I allude to the magnificent bronze group

facing the Kremlin, erected twenty years ago to the memory of the illustrious and high-minded Mijnine, who—a private citizen of the once rich and extensive but now decayed city of Nishnei-Novogorod, when, in 1610, the princes and nobles of Russia lay crushed and crouching at the foot of a foreign foe, their country overrun, with the capital in the hands of their bitterest hereditary enemies—was the *first* to rise and call upon his fellow-compatriots to free their native land from the evils and miseries it suffered from the tyrannical dominion of the Poles.

The appeal was not lost, and the result was the long, fearful, and sanguinary struggle, which terminated in the final expulsion of the latter by the Russians under the gallant Prince Pojarskoi beyond the frontier.

A short distance from the venerated monument is an object of a different kind, though also possessed of a considerable degree of interest, and which consists of a church, the formation and architecture of which is certainly the most singular and original perhaps

the world can boast of, presenting such a mass of coloured stone, marble, and gilding—such a confusion of different descriptions of building, all huddled together, as to render it wholly unlike any other object of a similar kind throughout the habitable globe.

It is known by the name of the Church of Ivan Vassilivitch, better known in history as John the Terrible—that execrable monster! —the record of whose life presents a picture beyond all parallel in the annals of sovereigns of similar character to himself. Henry VIII. and Mary of England; Philip II. of Spain, and Charles IX. of France, whose relentless cruelties may be traced to religious bigotry, fear, revenge, policy, and other causes; while those of Ivan, on the contrary, repeatedly exhibited nothing but a fiendish and cold-blooded desire of rioting in human slaughter.

On one occasion, a slight disturbance arising in a populous and wealthy city in the southward regarding some dues to the Imperial Treasury, he caused the place to be surrounded, the whole population—men, women,

and children — to be butchered, and the city itself to be levelled to the ground!

At another, without any reason being assigned whatever, he invited the principal citizens of Moscow to a grand review of his troops, in the midst of which, on a given signal, the latter fell upon the unarmed multitude, upwards of seven thousand of whom were murdered on the spot!

The history of the very church itself, called after him (for, like most tyrants, he was at the same time an intolerant bigot), even afforded an instance of his sanguinary ferocity. The artist is said to have been a Greek, who had been invited from Constantinople by the Czar, for the express purpose of its construction; which, being completed, he sent for the architect, and, after complimenting him in the highest terms on his diligence and skill, in addition to paying him double the amount of the sum he had originally promised him for his services, loaded him with presents of the highest value.

As the grateful and delighted foreigner was

about to leave the Imperial presence, the Czar carelessly inquired of him if he imagined there was any other person in the world who could construct a building of a similar nature? Elated by his good fortune, the unsuspecting Greek, with the utmost confidence, replied, he felt convinced no one was capable of such an undertaking but himself.

"In that case," replied the tyrant, "it shall be my care that *you*, at least, never build another;" and, on a signal being given, the head of the unhappy architect rolled to his feet!

The interior exhibits a gorgeous and barbaric *mélange* of paint and gilding, but is otherwise not particularly remarkable.

In the evening, for the first time since my arrival, I accompanied the family of the Sardinian Consul, Mr. G——, to the French theatre, a favourite place of resort with the higher classes of Moscow: it is a light and elegant fabric, and to my taste abounds with the best order of Gallic entertainment, its performances being chiefly confined to vaudevilles and petit operas. There is also a large

national theatre, where tragedies, comedies, and musical pieces, translated from the various languages of Europe, are performed, and in which the latter are particularly well executed; to this, also, is attached a good corps de ballet, under the direction of a member of the Royal Academy of Paris, who receives a handsome salary from the government, the theatres, both here and at St. Petersburg, being completely under its control and management.

One of the most splendid, and at the same time useful and benevolent, establishments, not merely in Russia, but throughout the world, is the Moscow Institution for the children of the poorer orders of noblesse, who lost their parents during the period the cholera raged with so much virulence in the capital, and which may proudly throw down the gauntlet to the entire globe to find its equal.

If its foundation originally rested upon all that was noble and generous in nature, so those also upon whom its government devolved had the merit of selecting, as director

to carry out their intentions, one who, in benevolence, philanthropy, and every amiable feeling, was peculiarly fitted for the discharge of its requisite duties.

I allude to the excellent Mr. S——, its very able manager and comptroller, who did me the honour, on being introduced to him, in a short note by the Prince Governor, to accompany me in person over the whole establishment.

It was, indeed, an interesting spectacle, and one in itself which alone might cause the invocation of blessings on the head of the monarch (the present Emperor) who had first founded, and now entirely supports this noble receptacle for the orphan and the destitute, the children of those who, when living, devoted their lives to the service of their sovereign and country.

The whole had more the appearance of a university for the wealthy and powerful than a charitable institution; comfort, elegance, and even luxury, being everywhere visible. The education is of the very highest descrip-

tion bestowed in Russia on both sexes; and attached to the establishment is a museum and library of considerable extent, most admirably ordered and selected, as also a small chapel of remarkably chaste and elegant architecture.

The number of orphans at present assembled beneath its roof are rather more than three hundred; and it was a sight to gladden the heart, as we entered the playground (stored, by the bye, with every requisite for gymnastic enterprise, frolic, and manly exercise), to observe the rush made alike both by boys and girls, to hug their good and beneficent superior, who, I was literally afraid, would have his coat torn from his back in their eagerness to lay hold of him.

I have previously mentioned, that the education received is of the highest order, and it therefore depends upon the talents and acquirements displayed by the pupils to what profession they are nominated. Those whose early career seems to promise success are sent to the Diplomatique — that service to

which, in Russia, *none*, even the noblest, the wealthiest, and the most illustrious, are admissible, unless qualified for the discharge of its intricate and important duties. By far the greater part enter the army, but no restraint whatever is laid upon the youth's own feelings and inclinations; and he is carefully instructed in the principles of any profession he may himself select, and which he is subsequently left at full liberty to follow.

Of the girls, many form advantageous marriages and connections with families even of the highest rank; but the generality find a warm home as governesses in the mansions of the great and opulent, where they are kindly and hospitably received, and warmly welcomed as the friend of the family.

I have dwelt at length upon this picture, and trust I may be excused in the reader's estimation for doing so, from the feelings of mingled admiration and astonishment with which I regarded it, and may conclude its description, by the host of eulogium characteristically portrayed in what I have heard

mentioned as its *one* sole fault, viz., the establishment affords so elegant, so peaceful, and so secure a home, that many of its young inmates, with the highest prospects of advantage and happiness before them, are often reluctant to quit it.

The following Sunday, in the evening, I accompanied my friends General and Madame P—— to the public promenade, situated in the gardens of the Summer Palace of Petrowski, revered and venerated by the Russian peasant, as having been the favourite residence of Peter the Great. It forms an odd and singular, but interesting, pile in the old Russo-Tartar style, with the gardens and grounds laid out with considerable taste and elegance, the walks on either side being shaded by long and noble trees.

The scene which presented itself on our arrival was certainly unique and striking in the extreme, since a casual observer might have been led to suppose the two extremes of Europe and Asia had here met together. The large gilded equipage of the old Russian

noble, with its four long-tailed bays, some ten or fifteen feet distance being preserved between the wheel-horses and the leaders, was placed in juxtaposition to the light and elegant English carriage, containing a group of ladies, who had evidently passed the greater period of their lives in other lands. The young and noble guardsman, in his brilliant uniform, on his thorough-bred, attended by his groom (a burly, red-faced youth, with the characteristics of John Bull stamped indelibly in every lineament of his physiognomy) in his neat, simple, unpretending livery, was succeeded by a gorgeously-dressed Asiatic, from the frontier of the Arras, followed by half-a-dozen attendants as picturesquely attired as himself.

In fact, the elegant Parisian toilet of the ladies and dashing uniforms of the military, mixed with the various costumes — Turk, Tartar, Chinese, Armenian, Cossack, and Persian—combined to form a *tableau vivant* as singular as it was pleasing.

The Petrowski Palace is the spot to which

Napoleon retreated on the fire becoming general throughout the city; and it was from thence, with feelings better understood than described, as he gazed upon the awful scene before him, he gave vent to the exclamation of, "These are indeed Scythians?" Did any foreboding as to the ultimate result of that ominous event then strike him? From here, too, was dated his bulletin to the French capital, announcing *his triumph*, and from here also issued (when he found it could no longer be concealed) the proclamation containing the hideous truth!

The far-famed and magnificent University of Moscow was almost completely destroyed during the French invasion; and of its unequalled library, the richest in the world in Oriental manuscript and literature, it is said between three and four hundred volumes were alone preserved.

Though this institution had only been founded a period of some eighty years before the present time, its museums and literary collections, as well as the majestic grandeur

of its buildings, were of a description that few nations could boast of, and none could surpass. It wanted, on the whole, but that impressive and venerated halo, which the reminiscences of past ages alone can shed around it, to render the interest with which the passing traveller gazed on its splendid structure complete.

These particulars I gathered from Count S——, the Director-General of the university, who very kindly gave me an order for admission throughout the whole present establishment, the building of which is of vast size and great beauty of construction, while the library and rich and rare collections in the present museum, exhibiting a recovery almost magical from the disasters and desolation of 1812, intimate, in its rapidly-increasing prosperity, that a revival of its former splendour is not far distant.

I have spoken of the superb view of the old capital from the tower of Ivan Veliki, in the Kremlin; there is, however, another spot from which the tableau of this magnificent pano-

rama is by many travellers deemed even superior. I allude to the celebrated convent of Simonowski, or Saint Simon, a singular but handsome *mélange* of buildings, in the old style, situated on an eminence about four or five miles from Moscow.

My visit combined the double purpose of comparing the two, and hearing the splendid sacred music of the Vesper Service, for which this religious establishment is deservedly celebrated, and in neither was I disappointed. The view presented from the eminence on which the convent is situated, though I could not deem it superior to the one visible from the Kremlin, possesses so many features of a different nature, as to render each in its sphere an object of the deepest interest: while, regarding the music, I must confess, I was equally as much surprised, as perfectly entranced, at its rich and exquisitely full harmony, which I never remember to have heard surpassed, except in St. Peter's, at Rome.

The two following days were occupied in securing my passports, and preparing (melan-

cholv event!) for my departure. I had become acquainted a few days previous with a young clergyman, who, having officiated for a short time for the British Chaplain at St. Petersburg, had arrived on a flying visit to Moscow, and being about to return at the same period as myself, we agreed to travel together. As the diligences in Russia (that is, those between Moscow and St. Petersburg) are, beyond all comparison, the best in the world, and proceeding by them, there incurs no risk of detention on the road from the want of relays of horses, we agreed to take one of the smaller ones between us.

I know not if these pages will ever meet his eye, but, whether or not, I may record this passing tribute to his amiability and worth, in the reminiscences of the happy hours passed in his society during the period of our short-lived journey.

I must not, however, close this chapter without reverting to the admirably-ordered establishment of Mrs. Howard, at which I was domiciled during my stay in Moscow. I was

originally recommended to proceed there, on my reaching the capital, by my friend L——, when we parted in the Caucasus; and in the picture he drew of its excellent arrangement I was in no whit disappointed. The charges are moderate, and everything belonging to the whole expressive of English elegance, cleanliness, and comfort, with the additional recommendation of possessing sharp, active, and intelligent servants, accustomed to the wants of travellers, and ever on the watch to anticipate or fulfil them; in fact, in the words of a Russian friend, who visited me when there, I was in the enjoyment of all I could wish for, at a comparatively slight cost, while he was paying double the amount, at a more showy hotel, for dirt, neglect, and accommotion altogether of a very different and inferior description.

After bidding farewell to the kind-hearted and hospitable friends from whom I had received so much cordiality and attention—the P——s, the M——s, the Hanoverian and Sardinian Consuls, at whose respective houses

I might be said to form part of the family, walking in and out at all times and seasons, whenever it suited my pleasure and convenience, and ever received with the same gladdening welcome — on the 31st of October, in the midst of an execrably cold and bitter storm of sleet and snow, we jumped into the diligence, and drove rapidly through the streets into the St. Petersburg road.

Spite of the weather, I could not help putting my head out of the window to gaze upon the towers, minarets, and domes, now fast receding from view, and but dimly seen through the mist which enclosed them. Farewell, old city, seat of hospitality and hearty good-will: I still retain, and shall ever carry with me a vivid reminiscence alike of its antique and venerated buildings and warm-hearted inhabitants, with which the more refined and polished capitals of Western Europe never will and never have impressed me.

CHAPTER V.

From Moscow to St. Petersburg by Novogorod-Veliki.—Cursory Observations on Russia, its Laws, Customs, and Government.

The old adage relative to the frequency with which the meeting of extremes so invariably occurs, in no way receives so corroborative a verification as travelling in Russia.

I have previously adverted to the inconvenience the voyager is condemned to experience while journeying to the southward of Moscow; on emerging from the ancient capital, however, on the northern route, the whole, as if by magic, at once becomes changed. The broad macadamized road, diligently and carefully attended to, is enclosed

on each side by a row of fine trees; while at each post-house (a handsome building abounding in every accommodation), persons appointed by Government are in attendance upon the traveller, to supply whatever he may require; the whole presenting a picture of comfort, and even luxury, affording a strong contrast to the scenes through which he has hitherto so recently passed.

At the town of Twer we crossed the celebrated bridge of boats over the noble and magnificent Wolga, a river which, from its junction with the smaller streams of the Neva and the Twerza, may be said to unite the Caspian with the Baltic; thus forming a future mine of unbounded wealth from commercial spirit and enterprise, should Russia hereafter ever merge its present policy and government in a course of a wholly different nature, partaking of a far higher degree of utility, not to herself only, but to the whole civilized world.

Rather more than a hundred miles from the old capital, is the even yet more interest-

ing, though now decayed and fallen city of Novogorod-Veliki, or Novogorod the Great, its former glories and distinctions being totally disregarded and almost forgotten between those of the rival cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow; the equally classic and celebrated history of the latter, and the modern splendour of the former, having completely eclipsed this once renowned and venerable place.

It presents a melancholy picture of mouldering and decayed buildings, ruined churches, and deserted habitations, its once crowded population of upwards of two hundred thousand souls having dwindled down to less than ten thousand. Silent and melancholy, it has almost the aspect of a city abandoned in the desert, and recalls to the mind of the traveller feelings similar to those which he experienced on viewing the colossal ruins of former greatness still visible in the plains of Egypt and Asia Minor, as he gazes upon its vast and sombre churches, and its gloomy, grass-grown, and deserted Kremlin, towering in desolate yet sublime majesty.

Midway between the ancient and modern metropolis, we came upon an object which till now I was ignorant existed so far to the northward—I allude to one of the imperial military colonies. If in the south I was struck with the contrast between this part of the Muscovite population and the ordinary Russian serf, what must the difference have been here, where the squalor and filth everywhere visible, both in the persons and habitations of the feudal peasant, rendered only the more striking from its occasional intermixture with luxury and the elegance of civilized life, as exemplified in the chateaus, parks, villas, and pleasure-grounds of the nobility, which, laid out with considerable taste and elegance, adjoined or mingled with the dwellings of the serfs, which formed a painful contrast to the neat, prim, cleanly, and comfortable appearance of the cottages of the colonists, all ranged and preserved with the precision of a military parade!

I am aware that most travellers, the generality of foreign residents in the empire, and

a great number of the most intelligent among the Russians themselves, view these establishments as likely hereafter to be productive of considerable mischief to the Government and country, by thus introducing, as it were, two different grades of subjects, with habits and feelings so diametrically opposed to each other; but the long period of my sojourn in the country has convinced me that in the present state of Russia, while the utility and sagacity of the measure in a military point of view cannot be questioned, a surer or better system could not have been devised for the gradual amelioration and civilization of the lower orders.

I should not perhaps have ventured to advance this opinion on my own responsibility solely, opposed as it is to the one so universally entertained, had not a perusal of the able and interesting work of Field-Marshal the Duke de Ragusa [1] made me aware that I possessed the high authority of that illustrious

[1] Voyage de M. le Maréchal Duc de Raguse en Hongrie, en Transylvanie, dans la Russie Meridionale, &c., &c.

soldier, in coincidence with my own views and opinions, and who, speaking of the military colonies, observes—

"Si je considere ensuite cette population sous les rapports moraux, *je remarque qu'il y a vingt ans elle était barbare, presque sauvage, et qu'aujourd'hui elle est disciplinée, regulière, et donne l'exemple de l'ordre, et de l'économie.* Dans peu d'années, la population saura lire, écrire, calculer, et connaîtra bien sa langue. Elle a des principes religieux et moraux, et les connaissances en agriculture, qui conviennent à de bons cultivateurs, parcequ'elle a sous les yeux les exemples de la culture eclairée que les officiers dirigent pour le compte du régiment.

"Cette population est donc déjà tres-avancée en civilization, et elle m'a fourni l'application d'un principe dont je suis convaincu depuis long-temps; c'est que la civilization ne marche d'une manière utile et prompte que lorsqu'elle est l'effet de la volonté du pouvoir. Sans son concours efficace

elle est l'ouvrage incertain de la succession des siècles; tandis que, lorsque le pouvoir est éclairée et veut répandre les lumières, tout lui est facile, et il arrive comme par enchantement aux plus admirables résultats."

This testimony in itself speaks volumes as to the wisdom and utility of these institutions; while of their efficacy in a military point of view, as well as the lasting and permanent benefits to the empire certain to be derived from them, he draws the following simple yet striking and forcible picture:—

"Les douze régiments colonizés dans le Gouvernement de Cherson avaient reçu primitivement une population de soixante-cinq mille ames; il y en a été depuis ajouté vingt-sept mille deux cent dix-neuf. Aujourd'hui, cette population s'élève à cent treize mille quatre cent vingt-six ames. Les paysans possédaient quatre-vingt-seize mille six cent quatre-vingt-douze bœufs ou vaches; ils en ont aujourd'hui deux cent vingt mille cent dix; ils avaient

cent un mille bêtes à laine; ils en ont actuellement deux cent quatre mille cinq cent cinq; ils semaient quatre-vingt-dix-huit mille deux cent cinquante-deux tschetwerts de blé; ils en sement aujourd'hui deux cent dix-huit mille trois cent vingt-deux. De plus, les colonies militaires, indépendamment des secours qu'elles ont reçu de leurs magazins pendant une disette de deux ans, possédaient encore des réserves suffisantes en 1834 *pour faire vivre toute* la population, si la récolte eut manqué comme on pouvait le craindre. Et cependant les mêmes magazins ont fourni à l'armée, pendant la première campagne de Turquie, cent soixante-dix-huit mille tschetwerts de farine, et quatre-vingt mille d'avoine; et, pendant la seconde, trente-deux mille tschetwerts de farine, et quatre-vingt mille d'avoine; enfin, elles ont fourni, pour les troupes envoyées en 1833 à Constantinople, trente-un mille tschetwerts de farine, et trente-huit mille d'avoine. Ainsi l'Empire de Russie a naturellement et constamment dans ce pays des magazins inépuisables pour les besoins

extraordinaires de la population, et pour ceux que la guerre peut faire naître."

I shall now in a slight degree revert to the present state of Russia, and present a faint outline of a general nature relative to its government and institutions, this being necessary perhaps for the clear elucidation of many incidents adverted to in the course of the previous narrative.

Since the creation of the world, it may be said, no despotism was ever so complete in all its springs and ramifications as that of the Muscovite Sovereignty. In the great empires, the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman—at the period when the house of Othman rose to its highest pitch of glory and greatness—when the wisdom and valour of the Western Sovereigns, from the time of Charlemagne down to that of Charles the Fifth, had at different intervals reached the zenith of their fame and greatness; the power and strength of their governments, strongly based as it was, sometimes met with resist-

ance from, and at others was controlled by, the formidable jealousy of the feudal nobles, but more generally and with greater effect from the extensive influence of the Church.

Even under the sway of a Mahomet, a Solyman, an Abbas, or even the terrible Nader himself, the Mussulman priesthood possessed a degree of consideration and importance among the people, which commanded the respect and attention of even these all-powerful Sovereigns. Till the close of the sixteenth century, when the dominion of the Papal power had received its first tremendous shock, and been shaken to its foundation by the impetuous eloquence of Luther, and the doctrines of the Reformation, that of the clergy throughout all Catholic countries was even still more extensive; but in the Russian Empire this influence never has existed; and to the Czar, therefore, may justly be applied the arrogant assumption of Louis Quatorze, "L'Etat, c'est moi."

Head of the church in his own person, as the monarch ever has been since the accession

of Peter the Great, who removed the then reigning patriarch, and assumed the religious supremacy to himself—sole commander of the armies of the empire—the fountain-head of all its civil and judicious functions—absolute master of the lives and fortunes of his subjects, the will of the Muscovite Sovereign is paramount, the old Sclavonic laws serving as rules for his guidance, when not interfering with his own determination, but acting neither as a control nor hindrance when the reverse; the only curb to his dominion and authority being in those occasional outbursts of his well-drilled and highly-disciplined legions, when the iron tension which binds them together has been tightened to too great an extent, even for Russian patience and endurance, firm and lasting as it is, to submit to.

As regards the church and religion of Russia, it must in justice be said that, unlike other nations, from the period of her first adoption of the Greek creed, the bigotry and intolerant persecution which have marked that persuasion, as well as the Catholic and some-

times the Protestant, have never disgraced her annals.

Like most continental nations, though the shops are closed, and no business transacted on the Sabbath, it is invariably observed as a period of festivity and rejoicing: the opera, the ball-room, and the promenade, presenting a far gayer and more inspiriting spectacle on this day than on any other.

The clergy I have already mentioned as possessed of not even the slightest shadow of influence or power in the empire; the consequence is that, although among the higher ranks there are found some of its members remarkable for learning, piety, and ecclesiastical attainments, of the first order, the lower classes, in ignorance, vulgarity, I may almost say, degradation, are perfectly without parallel in any religion throughout the world, not even excepting Greece, the natives of which country themselves admit the minor orders of the clergy there to be the most abandoned miscreants in the world.

Of course, in a country where the military

profession is the one alone looked up to or esteemed, the highest grades of the civil service (with the exception of the diplomatique) even being disregarded and despised, it is reasonable to expect the members of the church would not meet with much consideration; the consequence is, that even the pastors of the largest villages are scarcely, in point of intellect or education, superior to the serfs and peasants, with whom alone they associate; the rich feudal proprietor, even a petty merchant in flourishing circumstances, deeming his society as unworthy of notice. Indeed, the salary they receive is so small, and so inadequate to their most ordinary wants, that their situation may be said to be far less enviable than the better class of slaves.

Their moral character also is said to be debased in the highest degree; and in the various prisons it is by no means uncommon to see some five or six reverend culprits immured at the same period. The most prudent, as well as the best conducted, generally

add to their income as well as their respectability, by engaging a small farm from the Seigneur of the property on which their duties lie.

Like the Armenians, the Russians have a horror of images in their churches, but on the other hand possess a high degree of religious veneration for paintings representative of illustrations from Scripture, and the glorious feats of some of their most favoured saints and martyrs, whose exploits in some of the remote temples of worship are frequently portrayed in a series of daubs and hieroglyphics, that would puzzle the Royal Academy and Society of Antiquaries to boot!

The fasts prescribed by their creed are said to be religiously observed and adhered to. Of this I possessed no means of forming a personal opinion, but I can speak as to the exactitude with which a similar rule is practised regarding their feasts, since, on passing through a town, in the course of my route from the Caucasus, on the anniversary of one of some degree of celebrity, the scenes of

inebriety frequently presented on the occasion were such as I have never yet witnessed or heard of in any other clime or country.

Though the tenets of the Greek creed in a great measure accord with those of the Catholic, in some there is a marked and striking difference, the most remarkable among which is, the priesthood are not merely permitted but encouraged to marry, though the dispensation, I am rather inclined to think, is taken advantage of by the lower orders alone, as I am not aware of any of the church dignitaries with whom I came in contact at Moscow being otherwise than in a state of single blessedness. Another very wide and important distinction is, that all classes, whether laical or clerical, are allowed the free use and perusal of the Scriptures in their native tongue.

The high church officers, archbishops, bishops, and metropolitans, are almost invariably selected from the ecclesiastical orders of brotherhood, some of which fraternities, by Imperial donations and large private

bequests, possess very extensive funded as well as landed property. Like our own Harry VIII., the Empress Catherine II. gave them more than one heterodox squeeze, which mulcted them considerably of a part of their superfluities; and the present sovereign is said to have his eagle glance fixed upon their remaining revenues, doubts arising in his mind if they would not be much better employed in being appropriated to the use of his fleet and army, than in supporting a class of fat, idle gentry, wholly incapable of serving in either the one or the other. Heaven help the poor frères, if my friend Nick puts his paw upon them!—for assuredly he is not the man to do things by halves, and will help himself to little less than the lion's share.

Foreigners are rarely, if ever, found in the interior of the Muscovite empire, even in the largest cities, with the exception of Moscow. This may be owing to the Imperial ukase prohibiting the native of any other land ever settling permanently in the country, without first becoming a naturalized Russian subject;

to St. Petersburg, Riga, Odessa, and Archangel, and, I believe, all seaports, this rule does not apply; as, however long established may have been the residence of strangers in these cities, still their presence there is deemed as merely temporary for the benefit of trade; it is here, therefore, almost the entire population of foreign merchants are domiciled, but few being found in the old capital, although there, as in St. Petersburg, the greater number of opulent tradesmen are foreigners, chiefly French and German.

By-the-bye, I must not omit to mention *one* regulation relative to travellers, which the humorous and satirical Mr. Stephens, the American barrister, in his extremely interesting narrative,[1] characterises as highly expressive of Russian barbarity, and want of civilization, viz., the ordonnance which requires

[1] Incidents of Travel in the Russian and Turkish Empires, by J. L. Stephens, Esq.: a work consisting of light sketches, drawn with the highest degree of accuracy, spirit, and impartiality; and rendered extremely amusing from its piquant style of mirth and drollery.

strangers, previous to quitting the country, to advertise their intention of doing so at three different periods, in as many successive gazettes,—a watchful and unmannerly attention to the interests of their subjects, on the part of the Imperial government, which effectually prevents many an aspiring and fertile genius from honouring the northern capital with his presence, and leaving evidence of his stay there behind him.

By ukase of the Empress Elizabeth, the punishment of death is *nominally* abolished throughout the empire, except in cases of treason and murder. I have said nominally, as, though the axe and the cord may no longer exercise their functions, except in these two cases, it is by no means uncommon for criminals to expire both under the knout, and, as I have previously shown, in the military punishment of running the gauntlet; the general award, therefore, both for political offences, and those of a general nature, consists in banishment to Siberia,—a sentence the proportionate severity of which depends

upon the nature of the crime of which the prisoner stands convicted.

As regards those exiled for the former, their destiny can by no means be termed a hard one, compared with the fate inflicted for similar transgressions in the other governments of Europe; as, after a short period of severity, their situation is gradually ameliorated, and they become colonists more than captives; and how far civilization has by these means found its way into these dreary wastes, may be gathered from the circumstance of Tobolsk, the capital, being possessed of its opera, salons, hotels, and all the accompaniments of a great city.

The chief hardship of the sentence consists in the journey; when all, without reference to rank or station, or the nature or magnitude of their offence, are chained together, and compelled to march on foot: while, to complete the picture of this arrangement, (so singularly severe and unjust), though, at the same time, exhibiting it as the mere adoption of convenience, it is by no means uncommon

to witness long files of recruits, under similar precautions, marching to join their regiments.

The fate of those convicted of murder, (whose punishment has been commuted), arson, burglary, or robbery accompanied with violence, is, perhaps, the most wretched the human imagination can conceive, and, while expressive of the wisdom and sound policy of the Imperial Government regarding the measure, renders the sentence to the convict a hundred times more terrible and efficient than if the capital punishment itself had been inflicted, since he must turn to death alone as his best, indeed, only relief, to the life of misery, without intermission, he endures.

From the moment of the criminals reaching their destination, the light of heaven is for ever excluded from their view, and it is expressly intimated to them that all further intercourse between mankind and themselves is cut off for ever; their very names even are no longer heard, and by given numbers are

they summoned by their keepers and jailors to their daily toil, alternately 'mid the fetid and unwholesome vapours of the mine, and the pestilential heats of the laboratory. Could a similar doom be awarded in England, capital punishment in all cases might then, indeed, with safety be abolished.

In point of precedence in society in Russia, as the reader may suppose, all is arranged by the *code militaire;* and a prince or noble of the highest class, not in the Imperial service, whatever may be his title, birth, or wealth, in "pride of place" ranks below the junior cornet or ensign in the community; while a tinge of absurdity attaches itself to the procedure, and causes a smile on the traveller, when he hears the position of the venerable the judges, the senators, the heads of the different civil departments, government factories, &c., &c., determined by their relative military rank, and themselves not unfrequently addressed by its style and dignity. Imagine, for example, the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench being saluted as His

Excellency the Right Honourable Lord Denman, Lord Chief Justice, and *General-in-Chief!!*

In Russia, with the exception of the sturdy noblesse of Moscow, and the resident nobility and gentry of the German Provinces, a person of independent fortune, who is not in the immediate employment of, or has not served under the government, is rarely met with, and a native merchant, though wealthy in the extreme, and possessed of the highest degree of commercial talent and information, is disregarded and despised; even medical practitioners, not in the military service, however they may be remarkable for worth, ability, and skill, are not viewed in a much better light!

I must now revert to a bane and curse with which Russia is afflicted, and which, however notoriously practised among other nations, is a mere bagatelle to that in vogue throughout the entire Muscovite empire. I allude to the extent to which, in the most barefaced manner, bribery and corruption of the very worst description

is carried; from the charge of which no public department, whether judicial, political, or commercial, is exempt, and which frequently paralyzes with its withering influence measures alike beneficial to the individual and the government.

If a lawsuit is to be gained, a bribe to the presiding judge alone directs its decision; if a claim (however just) exists upon the Imperial treasury, the same method alone will realize its liquidation; if your passport requires to be *visé*, by similar means only can it be effected. In fact, in every stage and every grade, the same system prevails, from the meanest official to the Minister himself; and the open, unblushing manner in which cases are disposed of in the judicial and police courts, where the most notorious thieves and scoundrels of every description are allowed to escape with impunity, furnishes at once a picture disgraceful and scandalous in the highest degree.

It certainly speaks volumes in favour of the Emperor Nicholas that, from his very first

accession to the throne, the whole force of his active and vigorous mind has been turned towards decreasing this Augean evil; and many are the examples, strong and unexpected, that he has made of sundry delinquents, whom his own eagle watchfulness and searching information had detected in the act of their malpractices; but the remedy for this pernicious evil lies but in one course, which it is to be questioned if the government have either the resolution or ability to adopt, viz., that of placing their civil functionaries beyond the reach of temptation, by granting them such salaries as would render their situations of a value the practice of dishonesty would never induce them to risk the loss of. "Mais que voulez vous," said an extremely intelligent, and himself a highly-principled, friend to me, in reference to this subject, "people must live, and it is morally impossible for a *poor* man in the Russian service to be an honest one; he *must* either be a rogue like others, or starve.

That the interests of Government suffer in a similar proportion does not admit of a doubt,

although the vigilant Emperor, by his acuteness and activity, has considerably checked this part of the system, in which he is personally so intimately concerned; and the fate of more than one person of birth and distinction banished to Siberia has acted as a warning and example to those employed in contracts for the Imperial service.

Two successful examples, however, in which the Government were defrauded I may here mention. In 1839, when up the Euxine, the Russian Consul at one of the ports of that sea, an Italian, was ordered to procure a number of Turkish boats, for the purpose of being employed in landing the troops on the opposite coast of Circassia during the campaigns of that year. After some time, the agent wrote in reply, stating the difficulty of the undertaking, and eulogizing his own zeal and devotion that, in spite of every obstacle, he had succeeded, after incredible exertions, in collecting the required number, though at an exorbitant cost, a memorandum of which he enclosed.

The amount was duly paid; and, when the boats in question arrived, it was discovered a finer collection of all that was old, worn out, and worthless, could not have been brought together, in proof of which it may be mentioned that, the first time they were employed, a slight surf arising on the beach, the whole number were at once stove in and swamped. The amount realized by the Consul in consequence of this pretty transaction was said to be considerable. He shortly after its occurrence received an invitation to become a naturalized Russian subject; an honour, however, he, with many flattering encomiums on so great a distinction, *most respectfully declined!*

The other incident relates to a gentleman, a Pole, who was appointed to the situation of Director-General of the Customs in one of the districts recently incorporated into the Russian empire on the conclusion of the late Eastern campaigns. The salary, considering their generally very small amount, was handsome, at least sufficient to support his rank and respectability; and, being a person of supe-

rior ability and information, he sedulously devoted himself to the improvement of the trade and revenues of the province. In this he so admirably succeeded that, at the expiration of five years, both had increased to four times their original amount when he first took possession of his appointment.

At the end of that period, finding his health failing, he applied to be relieved from his post, and, after a brief and modest retrospect of what he had effected, solicited that some slight additional remuneration might be awarded him for the zeal and labour he had manifested in the public service. His application was laughed at as a capital jest; and it was only when his incorruptible integrity came to be fully known that incredulity gave way to ridicule and astonishment. His memorial was refused; but, as a reward for his previous ability and exertions, he was nominated to another district, where the opportunities of reaping a golden harvest were even more abundant than those afforded by the situation he had previously held.

Here, again, his good management became very soon apparent — trade flourished to an extent never previously heard of— but, *somehow or other*, the Imperial revenue scarcely increased a single ruble beyond its origin rate, in spite of the prosperity everywhere visible. This, however, attracted very little observation, so long as it did not decrease; and, after the lapse of a few years, M. de —— quitted the service, possessed of a considerable fortune, and retired to a fine landed property he had recently purchased!

There is, perhaps, no nation in the world, not even England herself, so completely dependant upon her commerce as Russia; not merely as regards the prosperity of her revenue, but the individual fortunes of every class of her subjects, from the noble to the serf: and it is a notorious fact that, while no ship quits a Muscovite port without a full cargo of hides, pitch, tallow, iron, hemp, rape, and other productions of the country, the circumstance of a foreign vessel arriving otherwise than in ballast is almost wholly unknown.

Well, indeed, might the Emperor Alexander declare that, in engaging in the war of 1812, it was his only resource to save his country from the utter ruin with which Napoleon's continental policy threatened it.

The greatest mart for foreign trade is, of course, at the capital, the richest and most extensive, though nearly the whole may be said to be exclusively confined to the four great seaports of Odessa, Riga, Archangel, and St. Petersburg.

Since the accession of the present Emperor, under his patronage and encouragement, manufactories of every description have arisen throughout the empire, not merely in the capitals and larger government towns, but on the estates of many of the principal nobility; and their productions in broadcloths, woollens, china, glass, and cutlery, find an extensive sale in the steppes east of the Caspian and Central Asia generally. The great drawback, as I have elsewhere observed, to Russian commerce in the interior is the great want of water-carriage, and the heavy expense attend-

ing its transit by land; to this rule the noble and magnificent Wolga alone forms the exception; on the bosom of this superb river hundreds of small craft, of every size and description, ply between the northern and eastern provinces; and, notwithstanding the immense number employed, but few instances are known of a vessel either going or returning in ballast.

The old Asiatic practice of commercial fairs is still adhered to in many parts in Russia, and, under the disadvantages I have mentioned, is productive of much benefit, both to the Imperial revenue and to individuals; the most celebrated among these is the well-known one of Nishnei-Novogorod, which I have heard from several intelligent foreigners to be, without exception, the most singular and interesting of its kind; since, from the period of the construction of the Tower of Babel, such a medley of different people and languages have never been witnessed as the town of Nishnei-Novogorod exhibits on this occasion. Travellers from Birmingham and

Manchester, modistes from Paris, sculptors and painters from France and Rome, venders of porcelain from Germany, and long-bearded merchants from Moscow, are mingled with silk-growers from Persia, horse-dealers from every description of the wandering tribes, Turcoman, Tartars, Kirghes, Kalmuc, and Cossack, each gazing in bewildered wonder around them, cachemere traders from Caubul, diamond merchants from Hindostan, venders of preserved fruits from the Levant, Chinamen from the frontier with their teas; idlers, travellers, faqueers, monks, soldiers, mendicants, dervishes; all forming the *tout ensemble* of a picture this spot alone, throughout the whole world, could either produce or witness.

In speaking of these various subjects, I must not omit to allude to where the chief strength and power of Russia truly lies. It is where it was long unsuspected, even when, subsequently, first known, disregarded, but is now universally acknowledged and feared; *it is her Diplomacy*, and in the subtlety,

acuteness, discrimination, and sagacity of its members.

To this carefully-selected body no person, as I have previously mentioned, whatever his birth, rank, or fortune, is ever admitted, unless possessed of talents, calculated to insure success in his career. Under a regular system of education for this all-important service, commenced at an early age, all having charge of her interests, from the youngest attaché to the highest dignitary, are ever watchfully and vigilantly on the alert, to turn even the most trifling occurrences to the advantage of their sovereign and country; and it may be said, without the slightest hesitation, that for one triumph Russia has gained by the sword (and the present generation are aware they are not a few), to her diplomacy she owes fifty.

What a painful contrast does this afford to the indifference on this vital and important subject, ever manifested by the English Government, and, through which, how many of, and how often have, the best interests of the

country been sacrificed! That this is not lightly stated, the following incident, from among a legion similar, will testify.

When, during the late Turkish campaigns, the whole of Europe appeared to be either on the eve of a general war, or once more threatened with an inundation from the tribes of the north, by the expected advance of Field-Marshal Diebitch from Adrianople on the defenceless capital of the Ottoman Empire, it was of the highest importance, both for the Austrian and British Governments, to be correctly informed as to the real strength and power of the Russian forces, and the probability of their commander proving successful, in the event of his executing his anticipated onward movement.

The Marshal himself, in his official bulletins, announced the amount of his force, as consisting of 60,000 men in admirable order, the hospitals almost empty, and his army supplied to the fullest and completest extent with provisions, stores, and equipments. To this was appended his firm declaration, that

if, at the expiration of a given period, the harsh terms he had tendered to the Sultan, as the only price of peace, were not immediately complied with, he would commence his march on the instant.

Implicitly believing what the slightest reflexion must have taught them to be wholly impossible, and completely scared with the idea of an advance of the Muscovite forces, the ambassadors of Great Britain and Austria urgently counselled and entreated acceptance, on the part of the Porte, with the proposed treaty. Some faint rumour, however, having got abroad, relative to the true state of the invading army, a despatch was sent off to Mr. Develuz, the British Consul-General at Adrianople, desiring *him* to forward an immediate report of the power and efficiency of the Russian soldiery.

The unfortunate result is best told in the *naïve* confession contained in that gentleman's own words, when the truth became subsequently too late discovered. "What was I to do? I did the best I could; made in-

quiries, and went among them, *but I had never even seen a regiment of soldiers in my life before!* For such a service, and one on which so much depended, why was not a military man sent?" The consequence was, the miserable treaty of Adrianople, which has for ever irrevocably fixed the Russian yoke upon the neck of the Ottoman, rendering the sovereign of the latter power but the mere vassal of the former, and made, too, at a period when the Russian army could only muster, in their ranks, eight thousand men; and even those so debilitated by sickness, it was questionable if they could have advanced ten miles: when a fresh, active, and vigorous army, thirty thousand strong, under Mustapha Pacha, composed of Albanians, the hardest and bravest soldiery among the Turkish soldiery, were in full march to crush and overpower them, and when a single menace, on the part of the British Cabinet, would have been gladly seized upon as affording an excuse for an honourable retreat.

And yet, by what means might the whole

of this disastrous, ay, and disgraceful, business have been avoided? Simply, the presence of a single military officer attached to our Embassy at Constantinople! Well, indeed, might a Russian officer exclaim to me, on one occasion, in reference to the circumstance, "Who would wish to fight you, when we outwit you so cleverly? In this case, a single Serjeant-Major was worth all the diplomacy in Europe."

What a striking contrast does this anecdote afford to the system practised by the Muscovite Government, at the principal embassies of which London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Constantinople, and Téhèran, one or more officers, the ablest, perhaps, in corps d'état major, are invariably attached to afford aid and information to the Ambassador on military subjects, as well as transmit intelligence possessive of any interest that may occur regarding the same point, to the bureau of the Minister of War in their own country!

It is much to be regretted, that education

is still very far behind in Russia; but the efforts of the humane Emperor Alexander to remedy this defect have been more firmly and energetically followed up by his active-minded successor; the consequence has been that, while in the smaller towns and villages it is disregarded and unattended to, in those belonging to the government and large cities, public seminaries as well as universities are diligently and numerously attended by a docile and obedient class of students, eager in their search of knowledge and information.

At Saint Petersburg, an academy of painting has been established, in the salons of which are the works of several meritorious native artists, and it was by Steüben, a native of the Russo-German Provinces, I believe Courland, that that magnificent picture was painted, "Napoleon at the crisis of Waterloo," which proud momento of England's glory, to her shame be it spoken, seems far more highly prized in a foreign country, (the barbarous Russian too!) than her own; else

why was this superb work of art not purchased for our National Gallery?

Of the language and literature of Russia I can say but little, as never was there a country where the former was of so little utility; since, in all classes of society, it is never even heard; indeed, I have reason to believe that, till the accession of the present Sovereign, there were many of the higher orders of Russian noblesse who were ignorant of it altogether. The example of the Emperor, however, in encouraging the literature of his native language and country, has, of late years, wrought a most beneficial effect, and many works of *belles lettres*, history, and voyages and travels, have been produced by writers of considerable merit.

Of their poets, Pouschkin was the one the most celebrated and esteemed, being usually termed, by his countrymen, the Russian Byron. This unfortunate and highly talented man was killed in a duel, the commencement of the year 1837, by the Baron d'Hauntez, a French nobleman, serving in the Chevalier

Garde, or regiment of Cuirassiers of the Empress.

In the catalogue of Russian historians, Karamsuc stands without a rival. Of his remarkable and interesting history of his own country and Poland, translations have been made, both in the French and German languages, and its pages universally commended and quoted by the literati of both nations.

Of periodicals, both Moscow and St. Petersburg possess several newspapers, but, as may readily be imagined, not replete with much information, being chiefly confined to military details, and government and commercial notifications. A strict and diligent watch is maintained by the police on all foreign literature, particularly French; such, however, is the confidence reposed in English honour and integrity, that the London journals, periodicals, and publications, are freely admitted to the British Library and Reading Rooms, conditionally that the circulation is confined solely to its frequenters, and, of course,

it is almost needless to observe, an indulgence extended to this community only, and, under such a guarantee, has never been abused.

CHAPTER VI.

St. Petersburg.

Daylight was just breaking, the daylight of an extremely raw, bitter, moist, foggy, vapoury, Scotch-misty, execrable sort of day in point of climate, emblematic of all the detestables of England and Russia combined, that our diligence drove up to its Messagerie in the celebrated magnificent street of the Newfskoi Prospeckht. However on any other occasion I might have felt disposed to admire its general noble appearance, and the superb structures it contains, a variety of reasons concurred to prevent my doing so on the present occasion. In the first place, there was

scarcely light sufficient to enable one to discern any thing beyond fifteen or twenty yards distant; secondly, I was extremely fatigued; thirdly, the intense cold cut through both cloak and pelisse, and seemed to pierce to the very marrow; and fourthly, and lastly, I was as hungry as the d—l — the whole of which said causes, (especially the last) conspired to render me in a mood by no means likely to lead to my installation as a saint in the Georgian calendar, and would equally have disposed me to be utterly regardless of even a much more brilliant scene than the one before me.

After a cordial farewell of my fellow-traveller, who, for the short period of the remainder of his stay in the capital, returned to his old quarters at the residence of the Reverend Mr. L——, British chaplain at St. Petersburg, I called a drotchsky, and drove to the residence of Mrs. Wilson, in the Galerney Oulitza, an establishment which, if not possessed of the more gaudy appurtenances of the various hotels in the city, I had

been informed, was remarkable for English cleanliness and comfort.

Having experienced the united benefits of a sound sleep and hearty breakfast, I proceeded to report my arrival to the British Ambassador, Lord Clanricarde, he being my greatest authority here, and thence to perform the same duty at the residence of the Commandant-General of the city. By the first I was received with warmth and cordiality; by the second, with a stiffness and solemnity, so entirely different from that which I had previously experienced from any other Russian official with whom I had hitherto been brought in contact, that I hastily ran my eye over my buttons and appointments, to ascertain if any thing was out of place in my uniform! but no, everything was exact to the letter; my servant, a steady old veteran, had been vigilantly on the alert to prevent even the possibility of such an occurrence; spurs and sabre shone like polished mirrors, while everything was strapped, brushed, hooked, and buttoned, beyond the

remotest chance of a flaw, and had his Excellency taken a foot-rule in the one hand, and a volume of orders on dress in the other, I might have defied his utmost scrutiny.

For several days succeeding I was occupied in delivering and sending the various letters of introduction with which I was provided, and, on the several visits made and received in the course of this progress, I was equally worried and surprised, on observing a similar bearing in all with whom I had any communication. Ah! how I thought of good, old, hospitable, frank, friendly, and hearty Moscow! —and in the comparisons which I mentally instituted between the two cities, every invidious observation a splenetic imagination could suggest was liberally applied to the modern capital.

To all this, however, there was one exception, and, like most exceptions, the very reverse of the general rule; this was in the family of my friend L——, every member of which, including even an enormous Newfoundland dog, rushed to greet dear Stephen's Bri-

tish friend. Here, again, all around me was English, language, books, and music, while, as at Moscow, I was ever received with the cordial welcome of an esteemed relative, instead of the polite though distant regard of a casual stranger.

Madame L—— was extremely anxious regarding her son; and to the assurance of his health and safety, I was enabled to add a great deal regarding his attention to his regimental duties and general steadiness of conduct! The latter intimation, delivered with all the requisite gravity becoming such an important piece of intelligence, elicited a burst of laughter from the two young ladies of the family, the youngest of whom, a beautiful blonde, observed with a malicious smile, that my information was very agreeable, considering that when, with his regiment at St. Petersburg, their brother was the wildest being in the whole corps, and, they had subsequently heard, by no means much improved by his sojourn in the Caucasus, where, they understood, he was the foremost in every species of

wild frolic and mischief, in which he was alone surpassed by an *English officer*, who had by no means diminished the character for eccentricity usually established by his countrymen in the course of their travels!

This was a wincer, but I quickly assured her she must have been misinformed, that when *I last* saw him he was wholly intent upon his military devoirs, &c., &c. Indeed, when *I last* saw him, I could fairly asseverate to the truth of both the statements I had made, considering I had left him in the following society, not the most conducive, it must be confessed, for any excess of social intercourse, the more especially considering the circumstances under which they were placed at the time: Item—1 Serjeant and 14 artillerymen: Item—2 Subalterns, 7 Serjeants, and 120 rank and file, forming the head-quarters of two companies of infantry: Item—1 Serjeant, and 18 Cossacks of the Line: the whole quartered in a field-work, in which the exhibition of a nose, above the parapet, incurred the risk of being made a target for

at least half a dozen rifle-balls, should their active and vigilant adversary so far distinguish them as to honour the post with their especial surveillance.

After the warm and friendly hospitality of my friend's family circle, I did not like to question them relative to the reason of the marked and singular difference in the conduct of those in St. Petersburg, to whom I had been equally recommended, which, I had some apprehension, might, perhaps, have been productive of pain, but the following morning an opportunity occurred of explaining the real cause of this apparent frigidity.

Strolling down the Newfskoi Prospeckht, I suddenly heard my name shouted, and on turning to ascertain from whence this unexpected salutation issued, a drotchsky, drawn by two splendid horses, dashed up to the side of the trottoir, and I found myself warmly welcomed by the young Count de N——.

"Est-ce-que vous avez été presenté?" was almost his first question.

"Presented to whom, where, or what?"

Explanation quickly followed, and I found it was contrary to etiquette for any stranger to be received into the society of the capital, till he had first been presented by his Ambassador to the Emperor.

This piece of information was the very reverse of agreeable, implying, as it struck me, that according to my reception by the monarch would be that pursued towards me by his subjects; and considering I had recently come from an embassy, which all the world were, at this time, well aware, was constantly bickering and snarling with that of his Imperial Majesty, for aught I knew to the contrary, he might feel disposed, maugre my military character, to hold me responsible in my own person, for the sins of my liege superior and confrères of the diplomatique. The conclusion of the young Count's information, however, acted as a remedy for all evils, and this was the intelligence of the arrival, in St. Petersburg, of M. Rodofinikin from Teflis; the sudden and unexpected demise of his father, the celebrated statesman, having

rendered his presence necessary in the capital upon his consequent accession to the family estates and property.

To hail a drotchsky, and spring to the seat as it dashed up, was the work of a moment; and, directed by the Count, the asvashtichk, or coachman, drove to the residence of my kind and excellent old friend.

He was at home, as well as his amiable lady, and the joyful and cordial welcome which I experienced from both, had such an event been possible, would have even surpassed my expectations. In the course of conversation, reverting to the invariable kindness I had everywhere received throughout Russia up to my arrival at the capital, I could not forbear, in sheer spirit of spleen, making some very invidious comparisons between the latter and the rest of the empire.

Both Monsieur and Madame smiled at my observations, as the former good-humouredly replied, "You have forgotten, my friend, one old and established maxim, which I should have imagined so experienced a traveller as

yourself never would have lost sight of, ' when at Rome, to do as Rome does.' Great cities, in their courts and society, are, almost throughout the world, invariably the same; you have hitherto traversed a route where the appearance of a stranger is of rare occurrence, and where the old-fashioned notions relative to hospitality and kindness to the passing traveller are still retained: here, on the contrary, they are found, as in other European capitals; and the restraint of which you complain, while causing a momentary annoyance to impatient Englishmen like yourself, ever disposed to be angry when anything runs contrary to their own preconceived ideas and wishes, has at least this one great advantage, that it guards our families from the introduction into their domestic circle of improper characters, since each foreign minister is held responsible that he presents at the Imperial Court none but those who are strictly entitled to the distinction."

I was silenced, at all events, by this plain reasoning, if not convinced; however, such is

either the feeling produced by first impressions, or the extreme reluctance of human nature to admit oneself in the wrong, that, throughout the entire period of my stay in St. Petersburg, I never thoroughly overcame the feeling of surly dislike and ill-humour which possessed me on my first entrance, and which, indeed, in reference to our national peculiarities and prejudices, I should have felt myself wanting in patriotism and proper English feeling, had I wholly discarded.

One of my first visits in the way of lionizing was to the two grand cathedrals of St. Isaac, and our Lady of the Kazan. Thrown down by order of the present Emperor, in consequence, it is asserted, of the carelessness with which it was originally constructed, which placed its votaries during the service in constant dread of its falling, the former is now fast rising, and, when completed, it is asserted by the Russians, will be the finest monument of its kind in the world. The walls are of the richest and finest white marble, the which form a contrast, equally striking as beautiful,

with the red porphyry pillars in the interior, each rather more than sixty feet in height.

The cathedral of our Lady of Kazan is a chaste and elegant building, and regarded by all ranks in the capital with the utmost veneration; the altar itself, with the plate for the church service, is of the richest description, and inlaid with jewels, while the railing which divides the communion ground from the body of the church is formed of the richest silver fretwork; a slight, very slight dash of Eastern imagery about the whole renders it additionally attractive, while the effect is heightened by flags, banners, and similar trophies of military glory suspended around. Perhaps the most interesting object throughout is the simple yet handsome sarcophagus erected over the spot where repose the ashes of the celebrated Kutusoff, the Russian Fabius, and which, not inappropriately, are covered with a canopy formed of French eagles and standards captured during the invasion and retreat of 1812.

From the cathedral of the Kazan, I strolled to the celebrated line of buildings on the

banks of the Neva, known by the name of the English Quay, (which, with the Newfskoi Prospeckht, form the fashionable promenades of St. Petersburg,) so termed from the generality of the houses in this part of the capital being occupied by the British merchants settled in the metropolis, as also from its being the spot whereon the English factory is situated.

If ever a body of men could be found reflecting the highest lustre of honourable fame upon their order, their country, and themselves, it is the British merchants of St. Petersburg, through whose high integrity and unblemished character is greatly to be attributed the regard and esteem everywhere entertained throughout the Muscovite empire for English faith and English honour,—a feeling, let it be added, in which none more sincerely participate than its powerful ruler. Nor is their public reputation less honourable than their private worth of character in every way estimable; and, as regards myself personally, deep and lasting are the obligations for the most hospitable and invariable kind-

ness I shall have ever to acknowledge from Messrs. Cayley, Barnes, Plinkey, Anderson, &c., and others of my compatriots.

Parallel to, and in rear of the English Quay, is a very narrow street, called the Galerney Oulitza, but more generally known by the name of the English Back Line, though why or wherefore I never could ascertain, unless it is that it is so loaded with British families, that I was unable to discover, during the whole period of my stay, if a single native inhabitant was resident in it.

Here was Mrs. Wilson's establishment, in which I had engaged my apartments, the adjoining suite being occupied by the Count de Mastuzewic, so well known in the circles of Melton and London.[1]

It was down this street the insurgent soldiery retreated on the suppression of the celebrated *emeute* on the accession of the

[1] This nobleman is now no more; but I believe there are few Englishmen who became acquainted with him either in London, Paris, Naples, or St. Petersburg, that will not deeply and sincerely regret his loss.

Emperor Nicholas;—and a more unlucky or inconvenient position for such a manœuvre cannot well be imagined, since, in length averaging about six hundred yards, its breadth scarcely exceeds five-and-twenty feet; and when it is reflected that the extremities were flanked with batteries of field-pieces, which plied their iron shower upon the broad mark presented by the dense and helpless mass of columns, the three regiments being mixed together in one irretrievable *mêlée* of slaughter and disorder, the whole seems apparently conceived as an experiment for ascertaining how far the efficacy of grape and canister in its death-dealing work could be carried.

Dining one evening at Mr. Cayley's, Captain, now Coloned de B., of the Chevalier Guard, whom I met there, very politely offered to have his squadron out for my observation the following morning. It may readily be conceived the offer was gladly accepted, this officer being considered the smartest and most dashing in his distinguished regiment, and his squadron, *par consequence*, its division *élite*.

At the appointed hour I repaired to the barracks, and, accompanied by their commander, proceeded to the quarters of his squadron, where the men were drawn up, awaiting our arrival. They formed a noble spectacle; tall, powerful, and well proportioned, their height, averaging at least six feet two of English measure, with their admirably-fitted snow-white uniforms, and glittering helmets, in their rich simplicity, was admirably adapted to display them to the highest degree of advantage.

They went through the sword and carabine exercise, and that with such a degree of precision as to time, it really appeared as if arms, legs, and weapons, all moved together by some hidden spring. From the parade we proceeded to the stables, where, on the word being given, every horse was "peeled," and I had thus the opportunity of viewing each in succession, with the utmost minuteness. They certainly were of the first description, and so very far superior to anything of the kind I had hitherto previously beheld in

the armies of the continent, either in those of France, Austria, or Prussia, as to cause me a considerable degree of surprise; but, with respectful deference to the high and distinguished authority of the Marquis of Londonderry, I do not think they will stand comparison with those of our Household cavalry.

That gallant General saw the Chevalier Guard on the parade, where, it must be admitted, their appearance is imposing in the extreme; but had he, similarly to myself, observed them without their clothing or appointments, I feel convinced his opinion would have been different. In one respect, however, they possess a most decided advantage, which is, in numerical strength; for while our united three regiments can barely muster one thousand men and horses, the four corps of Russian Cuirassiers of the Guard fall very little short of four times that number.

In the evening, accompanied by the nephew of the French Ambassador, the Baron de Barante, who, similarly to myself, had recently

arrived at St. Petersburg, I proceeded to the Grand Opera. It was my first visit to this establishment, notwithstanding I had previously heard a great deal of its magnificence, the authenticity of which, if the truth must be told, with the reminiscence of Paris, Milan, and Naples before me, I had been very much disposed to believe as extremely apocryphal. I was therefore regularly posed, when, on entering the interior, the *coup d'œil* which struck upon my astonished vision at once exhibited the description I had previously heard portrayed, so far from being overdrawn, fall immeasurably short of the reality!

If I was bewildered, my French friend was disgusted; all his visions of the superiority of his beloved Paris, which he came fully prepared to vouch for, vanished at once, and *sotto voce*, in something very closely resembling bitterness of spirit, he whispered me, "the Academie Royale was nothing in comparison."

The performance was Auber's beautiful

ballet opera of the Bayadère; and while the music and dancing rivalled that of the San Carlo,— La Scala, — the Academie Royale, and the other great theatres of Europe, in scenery and costume the whole united would have fallen infinitely short of the present display in point of gorgeous and magnificent arrangement.

At the end of the first act, a young Russian naval officer, who occupied the stall on my left, observing that I was a stranger, politely accosted me, and imparted a piece of interesting intelligence, which immediately had the effect of putting me upon the *qui vive:* this was, that the Emperor having signified to his Council that morning the formal announcement of the approaching marriage of his eldest daughter, the Grand-Duchess Marie, with the young Maximilian, Duke de Leuchtenberg, the whole of the Imperial family were to be present at the opera this evening, by way of introducing the young Prince to the Russian public.

My informant had scarcely concluded, before a stir in the house, followed by a burst

of applause from the audience, announced the arrival of their expected Sovereign, accompanied by the Empress, the Grand-Duchesses Marie and Olga, and the young Maximilian de Leuchtenberg.

Nearly twenty years had elapsed since I beheld him, during the period he was in England, and, incongruous as it may appear, that lapse of time had infinitely improved, instead of deteriorating from, his personal appearance. His frame, though colossal in its make, moulded in nature's finest proportions, well assimilated with his erect, noble, and military carriage, bringing forcibly to mind an observation which I had once heard made by a Persian regarding him, viz., that if any human being was ever qualified for a monarch by the exterior advantages of majestic figure and high and kingly bearing, it was the Emperor Nicholas.

The young Duke wore the undress uniform of the Hussars of Kieff, of which splendid corps a recent ukase had appointed him the Colonel. He bore a striking resemblance to

his late lamented elder brother,[1] both being pronounced as possessing a strong likeness to their noble and gallant father, Eugène Beauharnois, Viceroy of Italy.

If the welcome accorded to the Czar may have had as much policy as loyalty in its greeting, not one living being, I feel assured, was there in the whole of that assembled multitude, who did not throw his whole heart and spirit into the shouts which saluted the Empress and her daughters. The countenance of the former, mild, radiant, and benignant, resembled in its sweetness of expression that of a ministering angel, as with the Grand-Duchesses she repeatedly and gracefully acknowledged her cordial reception by the audience.

Of the latter, the eldest, betrothed to the Duke de Leuchtenberg, and since married, possesses altogether the features of the Romanoff family; but the youngest, Olga, of the highest and most perfect description of

[1] Eugene, Duke de Leuchtenberg, first consort to the present Queen of Portugal, Donna Maria da Gloria.

blondine beauty, it is impossible to conceive a more finished picture of female loveliness, unsurpassed, perhaps, but by that of *one* (now, alas! no more), whom she is said very closely to resemble—her grandmother, the late beautiful, ill-fated, and high-minded Queen of Prussia.

Almost every member of my family perished in the wars of Napoleon, and circumstances connected with the fate of two of them, the nearest in point of blood and kindred, have not given me any great reason to be personally very partial to the reminiscences attached to his career, magnificent and glorious as it was; but the only time I ever felt disposed to execrate his memory was, when at Berlin I stood beside the sarcophagus which covers the revered remains of *her*, whose young heart became withered, crushed, and broken on witnessing the miseries inflicted on her country by his ruthless and iron sway.

The following morning a stronger frost than usual exhibiting symptoms of the permanent setting in of winter, I drove to Isaac's bridge,

a point to which all strangers are recommended to proceed, from the superb panoramic view afforded thence of the entire capital; nor is the traveller disappointed, for if ever he beheld a city of palaces stretched before him, that city is St. Petersburg.

How beautiful is the Neva! its tranquil waters covered with the vessels, and bearing the flags, of all the nations in Europe, anchored alongside that princely English quay. Beyond, again, observe that line of magnificent and unrivalled buildings, the Offices of State, in which the Admiralty stands the most conspicuous; and from thence, let the eye turn to the Imperial palaces, the lofty churches, triumphal arches, and other great monuments everywhere visible, among which are two remarkable as meriting particular attention; the first of these is the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, which, uncommonly well executed, is celebrated at once for the singularity of its pedestal, and the attitude in which the horse is portrayed, the former representing a bluff rock, and the latter as

rearing on its summit, having apparently only on reaching the verge of the precipice been checked by his rider.

The second is the column erected to the memory of the Emperor Alexander, which, for combination of grandeur and simplicity, cannot be surpassed by any in the world; the base is of richly-carved bronze, from whence the shaft rises, of dark red granite, composed solely of one single stone, eighty-four feet in height, the largest ever yet discovered in the world. It was found in the Imperial mines of Finland, and at considerable expense, and after immense labour, transported to the capital.

On returning from my stroll, I found a note from Count O——, of the General Staff of the Guard, (to whom I had brought a letter from his brother, commanding one of the regiments in Georgia), informing me that a grand parade was to take place on the following morning of the whole of the troops of the Imperial Guard by the Emperor in person, attended by the Duke de Leuchtenberg, and that, although I had not been presented (oh,

that infernal presentation!—I groaned in bitterness of spirit), an orderly would be sent to my quarters, for the purpose of conducting me to the ground, and escorting me to a situation from whence I could view the spectacle to the highest advantage.

Punctual to the appointed hour, my guide was in attendance, and we galloped off to the parade, on arriving at which, prepared as I had been to witness something in the way of military display I hitherto never previously beheld, the highest anticipations I could have ever formed would have fallen immeasurably short of the (I may term it) sublime spectacle presented by the mass of magnificent soldiery before me, in which it appeared the remotest corners both of Europe and Asia must have been ransacked to bring together its noblest and choicest chivalry. The powerfully-built Cuirassier, the stalwart and sinewy Hulan, the light and active Hussar, the gigantic Grenadier, the agile and vigilant Rifleman, each in their handsome and admirably-fitted uniform, offered a contrast at once singular and striking

to the mail-clad Circassian, the demi-European attire of the several Cossack troops, and the gorgeous costumes of the various Asiatic contingents.

A burst of music from the different bands now announced the arrival of the Emperor, attended by his son-in-law elect, and a numerous brilliant Staff. His presentation of the former to the soldiery I was not near enough to hear, but I ascertained from my friends afterwards that it was contained in the following simple yet expressive phrase, "My friends, I present to you my fifth son."

The assembly of this morning was merely intended as a parade, and, beyond marching past, nothing in the way of any movement took place, much to my regret; as I had been informed, by several foreign officers present, the Emperor handled this immense body of men with the facility that many would a single regiment. He certainly both looked and rode a fitting leader to his guard; his gigantic and martial figure, on his bright and full-blooded bay charger, rendering him

by far the most conspicuous figure amid the whole of that gallant and brilliant array.

It was on this occasion I witnessed for the first time an alteration in the heavy cavalry equipment, which, if followed up, in the event of a general war, is likely to be productive of a corresponding degree of change throughout the whole system of military tactique, especially as regards the infantry. I allude to the system recently introduced into the Russian Guard of arming the Cuirassier regiments with lances, with which the whole of those corps are now provided, the weapon being of a longer and heavier description than that carried by the Hulan or Lancer.

I was the only English officer present, but there were several Austrian, Saxon, and Prussian strangers like myself, and in our conversation relative to this important innovation, I believe among the whole of us there was not one dissentient voice, that, with horses well-trained, and the riders possessed of the requisite nerve, infantry, as at present

armed and organized, would be utterly unable to withstand them.[1]

While to arrive at an exact statement regarding the *bonâ fide* general amount of

[1] I have perused with much attention and interest the writings of Colonel Mitchell on this subject, which from time to time have made their appearance in the United Service Magazine, and without altogether ranging myself on his side of the question, must confess that the justice and accuracy of many of his conclusions are fully borne out by intelligence I have gathered from many distinguished officers who have served in the recent Polish, Turkish, Persian, and Caucasian wars. I have already alluded to the utter extermination by the Turkish cavalry of a division of infantry of the army of Field-Marshal Diebitch at Dervish-keuy, in the passage of the Balkan: had this corps been brought up while on the move by a sudden and unexpected attack, it might have been said they were in confusion at the onset, and that the square was incomplete, or but half-formed, with the many various reasons of a similar nature usually assigned on such occasions; but, in this instance, the troops were formed in position, in two distinct squares, *en echellon*, nearly an hour before the Grand Vizier, the late famous Mahomed Redschid Pasha, (who commanded the Turkish army in person), ordered the Spahis to advance. The first which received their impetuous onset was broken, and ridden through on the instant; and, after carving, *ad libitum*, till scarcely a Muscovite was left standing, they re-formed, and rushed upon the second, which, although the struggle was fiercer and longer protracted,

the Russian army is wholly impossible to ascertain, the actual numerical strength of the Imperial Guard alone is very difficult, from the contradictory statements given by the officers themselves, in which the aggregate varies from forty to eighty thousand men!

eventually shared the fate of the other. I may also revert to another instance relative to this subject, though of a wholly different nature. The Portuguese cavalry, I am led to believe, is a branch of that army which has never yet stood particularly high in military estimation, either in the zenith of the fame of that Power, or the more recent periods of the Peninsular campaigns, and the late civil war; but on the last final and sanguinary assault upon the Lines of Oporto, 25th July, 1833, during that memorable siege by Field-Marshal Bourmont, when his massive columns, covered by clouds of caçadores, (riflemen), vainly sought to carry the batteries of Lordelo, (which formed the key of his adversary's position), from the difficult nature of the ground, and the carnage occasioned amid his ranks by the fire of the besieged, a regiment of cavalry, (the 4th, or Chave's Dragoons), headed by the famous Lerochejaquelin, the Vendean Chieftain, dashed forward, and, reckless of the heavy loss they sustained, charged right down, and by a flank movement gained the rear of the field-works, the one on the extreme right of which was almost carried, when at this critical moment a rifle-ball pierced the side of their noble leader, who fell desperately wounded. The dragoons lost heart at this disaster, occurring, as it did, almost in the

As far as I myself could judge, on this occasion the parade mustered about 6,500 Regular Cavalry, of all arms, 20,000 Infantry, 2,000 Sapeurs and Artillery, 3,000 Cossacks, and 1,000 Irregulars, making in all an average of from between thirty-three to thirty-five thousand, and in this opinion Colonels Von L—— and De M——, of the Austrian and Prussian services, who, like myself, had served for many years on the Staff, concurred.

very instant of success, and, wheeling about, retreated as suddenly as they had advanced, sustaining a very heavy loss in their retrograde movement, and actually leaving the bodies of eight men and horses in the battery which formed the scene of their daring exploit. Captain Glasscock, commanding the British squadron in the Douro at the time, has characterized this movement in his Sketches of the Siege of Oporto, as one of the rashest actions ever attempted; but that gallant seaman should have remembered, all things are comparative, and some of Britain's exploits on the ocean, in the way of boarding, and cutting out, &c. &c., would be equally as astounding in the estimation of the Hungarian, Turkish, and Persian soldiery, and other nations of horsemen, as the feat in question of the daring partisan appeared to him, the more particularly as regards the latter people, who have a proverb "that, wherever the foot of man can go, the hoof of the charger will securely tread."

However, the following state, though imperfect, may be considered a very fair estimate of the Imperial Guard, both as to actual numbers and detail.

CAVALRY.

Regiments.	Uniforms.	Average Total of Lances, Sabres, or Bayonets.
4 regts of Cuirassiers, each 800 strong	White	3,200
2 regts of Hussars, each 800 strong	Scarlet ...	1,600
2 regts of Lancers, each 800 strong	Blue	1,600
1 regt of Dragoons	Green	800
2 pulks of Regular Cossacks, embodied chiefly from the minor tribes, each 600 strong.....	Scarlet ...	1,200
Contingents from the several great tribes, viz.,		
1 pulk of Cossacks of the Don	Sky Blue...	600
1 ditto, Black Sea	Dark Blue, with Red Sleeves	600
1 ditto, Ourenbourg	Dark Blue	600
1 ditto, the Line	Circassian Costume	600
Circassian, Kirghis, and other Asiatic Contingents	A rich uniform national costume	600
Total of Cavalry.....		11,400

INFANTRY.		
Regiments.	Uniforms.	Average Total of Lances, Sabres, or Bayonets.
7 regts of Grenadiers, composed of three battalions, each battalion 1,000 strong	Green	21,000
1 regt of Marines (Equipage de la Garde)	Green	1,000
1 regt of Finland Riflemen	Green	1,000
1 ditto of Veterans	Green	1,000
Total of Infantry		24,000
ORDNANCE.		
1 battalion of Sappers	Green	1,000
4 troops of Horse Artillery	Green	800
12 companies of Foot Artillery	Green	1,800
Total of Ordnance		3,600

Total of Ordnance	3,600
Total of Cavalry	11,400
Total of Infantry	24,000
Grand Total	39,000

This splendid force is, of course, an army in itself, possessing its own Etat Major, Com-

missariat, &c., &c., and, in fact, in lieu of terming it the Imperial Guard, a mere showy appanage of the Crown, it might with much more propriety be termed a "Corps d'Armée Elite."

I have previously mentioned the utter impossibility of arriving at any real conclusion regarding the actual amount of the Russian forces, the division of which is made into seven Corps d'Armée, (including one of reserve,) composed of four regiments of cavalry (light or heavy, according to the pleasure of the Emperor, or the Minister of War), and twelve of infantry, (the latter being formed of four battalions, each 1000 strong,) with an average proportion of two troops, or sixteen guns, of horse-artillery to the former, and from twelve to fifteen companies of Foot to the latter. These in numerical strength would form, say 4,000 cavalry, 48,000 infantry, and 2,000 artillery, thus rendering the full amount of the various corps at 374,000 men.

This is exclusive of the armies of Ouren-

bourg and the Caucasus, the latter of which consists of 45,000 men, but having only one regiment of regular cavalry, the Nishnei-Novogorod Dragoons, and, from what I could gather regarding the former, about half that number. To these must be added 140 regiments of Cossacks, varying in number, but generally rated at between 70,000 and 80,000 men, and about fifty garrison battalions of Invalids. The grand total, therefore, of this immense establishment may be fairly supposed at between 600,000 and 620,000 men, without enumerating either the military colonies or the Cossacks of the Line and Black Sea, both of whom, from being engaged in one constant scene of never-ending warfare with the mountaineers of the Caucasus, may be said to be organized as a levy *en masse*.

A few days after the review, I proceeded down the river in a steamer to Cronstadt, having very kindly been furnished by Admiral Greig (whom I had had the pleasure of meeting at Mr. Anderson's) with a letter of introduction to one of his former Flag-Captains,

Captain N——, soliciting him to accompany me over the fortifications and other objects of interest permitted by the Imperial Government to be visited by strangers.

I was politely received on arriving, and, my host's time being then fortunately unoccupied, we at once began our tour. Cronstadt is certainly the Malta of the North, and as ugly a looking place as an assailing party would wish to look at. Utterly unapproachable all round, with one single exception, from the extreme shallowness of the water, the entrance formed by this channel is garnished with a serried, double line of guns, gaunt and grim, through which any bold intruder would have to run the gauntlet, as the opening movement to any assault upon this formidable bulwark.

The citadel is of immense strength, as also the line of works known as the Rizenbank batteries, but both sink into insignificance beside the Castle of Cronschloth, and the Mole, which seem a realization of artillery on the plan of the dense formation of an infantry square, so bristling is the array of guns which they present to view.

Cronstadt possesses three harbours; the first, for mercantile vessels, is a remarkably fine one, and securely sheltered. It is capable of holding, with the utmost facility, from a thousand to twelve hundred vessels, and in the summer time, I am told, presents a gay and animated spectacle, as, from the short period of the trade being open, it is then literally crammed with the ships of all the nations of Europe; but, owing to the daily, I may say hourly anticipations of the setting in of the frost, similarly to those at St. Petersburg, all had quitted the anchorage two or three days previous, with the exception of five or six, who intended passing the winter there.

Indeed, the same fear compelled me to take my own departure earlier than I either wished for or anticipated, and for similar reasons I was obliged to return to the capital the second day of my visit, as, had I been fairly caught, a compulsory stay of some time would have been the consequence, and I should have been unable to have left till the period when

the ice would have been sufficiently strong for travelling *en traineau*.[1]

The other two harbours are exclusively confined to the use of the Imperial Navy, and bordering which are the magazines, offices of Admiralty, docks, rope-walks, &c., the whole of which, in cleanliness, order, and regularity, cannot be surpassed by those of any nation in the world.

[1] In 1835 the frost set in so suddenly that forty vessels were obliged to remain at Cronstadt the whole winter; it fell in one night only, and although several English ships, among the number of the *détenus*, made strenuous and unwearied exertions to get out by cutting the ice, it so rapidly increased in strength that all efforts were vain, and they were compelled to give up the attempt.

CHAPTER VII.

Saint Petersburg—Conclusion.

I shall now proceed to offer a few remarks upon a subject, the which has caused more discussion and a greater variety of opinion, even among professional men themselves, than any connected with Russia that has ever yet been brought forward: I allude to the Muscovite navy, regarding which I may mention that none of the very slight remarks I am about to offer are hazarded without the impressions they convey having met with the concurrence of several naval officers, chiefly foreign, but including one or two English, whose opportunities of forming a true estimate of the Russian maritime power have

been such as others have seldom, if ever, possessed.

Till the accession of the present sovereign, the Muscovite marine may be said to have barely existed, so neglected and decayed had it become since the eventful day of Trafalgar, where the fleets of France, in that last deadly struggle with her rival, were swept beyond the power of further competition with her victorious adversary on the surface of the ocean.

Never at any period a favourite service with the Russians themselves, the Emperor Alexander, from that time relieved from all fear of maritime aggression on the part of Napoleon, turned the whole of his attention towards his land forces alone, as the arm by which the fate of Continental Europe must be decided.

On the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, and the return of the Autocrat to his own dominions, the same system of neglect towards the navy was observed, and on his death, at Taganrog, in 1826, the whole of the Imperial marine, with the exception of three or four

frigates in the Mediterranean, was confined to a number of old, worn-out vessels, one-third of which was barely accounted sea-worthy.

To the present Emperor, therefore, solely belongs the reputation of having created this power by his own energy and exertions; and to his activity and vigilant watchfulness alone is owing whatever degree of efficiency it may have attained, as, sooth to say, with some few solitary exceptions, chiefly foreigners, the service even now is by no means a popular or agreeable one, either with officers or men.

As regards numerical strength, the Russian navy may, indeed, be termed formidable, the combined fleets of the Baltic and the Euxine mustering fifty-five line-of-battle ships, and thirty heavy frigates, from forty-four to sixty guns, besides a large number of corvettes and small craft of every description, the various estimates for which exhibit a total of ready-trained seamen amounting to rather more than 50,000 men. But then, as regards their nau-

tical skill and discipline?—that oft-repeated and obstinately-disputed question.

In the course of two and twenty years' service I have seen a great deal of our own men-of-war, both in my earlier days, but more particularly within the last eight or ten years. Since the period of my being first employed on a special service, I have also had many opportunities of observing the French; and, if I was struck with the difference between the bold, free, and careless bearing of our own jolly tars, and the semi-military appearance of the Gallic seamen, it may easily be imagined with what astonishment and incredulity I regarded the first detachment of Russian sailors I fell in with, who, with their erect starched exterior, the very ultraism of stiff military bearing, their beautifully-cleaned belts and appointments, jackets, and foraging-caps, seemed the very beau-ideal of some crack regiment in the capital.

But take a glance at the training of the seaman, and let it speak for itself. The army officers assert, I know not with what justice,

that of the entire body of recruits the worst are sent to the navy. On joining the head-quarters of the corps to which he is appointed, (for all, agreeable to military detail, are regimented according to rule), the conscript is duly cropped, drilled, and pommelled, *à l'ordinaire*, and at the expiration of the usual period, having completed his usual routine of instruction as a soldier, is sent on board a line-of-battle ship, and never, perhaps, having previously seen a fishpond in the whole course of his life, is entered at once upon the duties usually awarded to an expert and skilful seaman, to the exercise of which four months alone in the year are allowed, the remaining eight being devoted to military drill and parade in barracks.

Can a system like this be reasonably expected to prove effective? Suppose, for example, a British regiment, on a similar principle, was shipped on board one of our own men-of-war; admitting the justice of the conclusion that *provided the weather was calm* (!) they could handle the ropes and tackles, man the

guns, &c., *if it did come on to blow!* Oh! ye unfeeling rascals, ye sons of the ocean, say how often have you held your sides, half splitting with uproarious laughter, at the miseries endured by your helpless red-coated confrères, embarked in the same vessel with yourselves!

If this is the case with the English soldiery, whose food, or climate, or some other reason, is generally supposed to habituate the natives of the British Isles very quickly to a life or passage at sea, what must its effects be on the inhabitants of the continental nations, whose diet and habits are so totally dissimilar, that a long course of training is requisite to render them capable of even the most ordinary exertion on an element to which they have been so wholly unaccustomed.[1]

[1] Towards the close of the year 1832, I was embarked with a French regiment in a large steamer, the voyage of which it was anticipated would not exceed three days. On the second day of our leaving port, we encountered a furious gale from the S.W., and, after several ineffectual efforts to make head against it, we were compelled to put back. The soldiery were chiefly men of the late Royal Guard of Charles X., men of uncommon size and vigour; but so

I must not, however, omit to mention that such is the docility and amenity to discipline of the Russian seaman, that, considering the disadvantages under which he labours, it is perfectly incredible the proficiency he attains (especially in the mild climate of the Mediterranean, where, too, he is continually at sea), which has repeatedly elicited the admiration of the officers of our own fleet there.

In the Baltic, I am inclined to believe the very reverse is the case; at least, the year I was there a line-of-battle ship and heavy frigate both ran aground (a circumstance, I was informed, by no means unusual during the short yearly cruize of the fleet), in a gale of wind, if it could be so termed, that would not have altered the course of a Channel pilot-boat, while a magnificent steamer, with a picked crew of officers and men, having the Empress and Grand Duchesses on board, ran

utterly paralyzed were the whole by sea-sickness, that the surgeon of the vessel afterwards declared, if we had remained at sea, and the gale continued, he was firmly convinced that at least twenty of the men would have sunk under it.

some risk of sharing a similar fate; an incident which so provoked *General* Wilson (a Birmingham gentleman, held in universal esteem), the director of the Imperial manufactories, that he very roundly declared to her Commander he knew no more of a steamer than a hog!

And yet there is a College of Naval Cadets at St. Petersburg, the which (were the military flummery omitted) is well arranged for the training and education of excellent officers, and in which the Emperor himself takes the highest degree of interest. It is under the control and management of the good and venerable Admiral Kruzenstern, who for many years served in the British Navy, and than whom for such a service a fitter selection could never have been made; at the head of, or inspecting and reviewing his youthful corps, the spectator calls to mind the representation of the Patriarchs of old, presiding over their numerous descendants. In a large and lofty apartment of the institution is the model of a frigate, about fifty feet long, by

means of which the students are carefully instructed regarding the handling of the various ropes and tackles, reefing and furling sails, &c., &c., while every year the entire body are shipped in a frigate, for a short cruize, during the summer in the Baltic.

Regarding their vessels, the Russian men-of-war, though heavy in make, and possessing a very irregular appearance from the variety visible in their build, in guns, stores, and rigging, and in their interior arrangement altogether, are well found and in good order, while, in point of cleanliness, even the ships of the British Navy cannot be deemed superior. One fatality, by all accounts, seems to attend them, which must render the Russian marine a continued drain upon the Imperial treasury, and this is, that whether, owing to the wood of which the vessels are constructed not being properly dried or seasoned, or, as some assert, the *freshness* of the water in the harbours of Cronstadt, they so quickly become unserviceable from rot, that, by the time the short space of fifteen years has expired, they

are utterly useless, and are compelled to be broken up.[1]

A few days after my return to the capital, down came the winter in good earnest; in one night the Neva was frozen over, and four and twenty hours afterwards crossed, in a variety of thoroughfares, to the opposite side of the city.

Sledges and ice-hills now quickly came into play. The latter is a species of winter amusement very much in vogue among all ranks, sizes, ages, and sexes in the Northern metropolis, and is similar to what many of my readers are, in all probability, familiar with, as prevailing several years ago in Paris, under the denomination of "les Montagnes Russe;" that, however, was far less frolicsome and exciting than the present, of which the following is a slight description.

[1] I have heard, since my departure from St. Petersburg, that this subject, having at last attracted the attention of the Imperial Government, orders have been issued to the various dockyards, requiring the wood used in future to be perfectly seasoned previous to its being employed.

A rough scaffolding being erected on the ice, with a slope sufficiently steep, is covered over with snow, down which are thrown several buckets of water, which, being perfectly frozen within a few hours afterwards, a small, light sledge, sufficiently large to hold one, or sometimes two persons, is dragged to the summit, when, upon being seated, a slight kick sends the vehicle flying with a velocity absolutely petrifying to the charioteer, who, half blinded with the rapidity with which he shoots along, on reaching the bottom of the declivity, begins to entertain some idea he is never going to stop, at least, such was my own impression, and led me to believe for the moment I was about making an involuntary second visit to Cronstadt. Gradually, however, the sledge decreased its swiftness of motion, and then came to a halt. On the progress of the conveyance being arrested, its occupant jumps up (pretty sharply too, if he would not incur the risk of being charged in the rear by the next comer, who may, perchance, have been despatched on his

excursion with a stronger impetus than himself), and, seizing the rope attached to it, drags the sledge back to its starting-point; it being considered as unsportsmanlike and derogatory to discharge this somewhat porter-like office by deputy.

It certainly is an inspiriting, invigorating exercise, and, on the occasion of any grand fête, when the Neva is filled with groups of every description, from the Imperial family to the peasant, the picture it presents is equally novel as agreeable.

At length the grand day of the presentation arrived, and a very important one it was, too, judging by the rolling of drums and the clash of arms, as the various guards paid their devoirs to Princes, Generals, and Ministers in quick succession, as they rolled onward in their gorgeous state-equipages to the Palace of the Hermitage, where, since the destruction of the magnificent and unrivalled Winter Palace by fire, in 1837, the Court has usually been held.

Lord Clanricarde proceeded at an early

hour, and on our arrival the party was conducted to the saloon of private *entrée*, passing through that of the general *assemblée*, now filled with a brilliant and dazzling display of uniforms, and every variety of magnificent costume.

The apartment into which we were ushered is one possessive of a singular, I might almost say a painful, degree of interest. When the Allies first occupied Paris, in 1814, and the Emperor Alexander had made his appearance in that capital, the admired of all observers, and surrounded by all the lavish adulation paid to a powerful and successful monarch, in that hour of triumph, in that period of glorious intoxication, a whispered murmur reached him that one, the beautiful, the elegant, the humane, and the beneficent, whose influence over her stern husband was never exerted for aught but good — the bright star of his destiny, with whom began his career of successful glory, and estranged from whom commenced his even yet more rapid fall—was dying, neglected, and deserted (all having, in

the terror of the moment, forsaken her, with the exception of two or three old domestics), in the palace of Malmaison!

In that instant, triumph, war, ambition, all was forgotten, and throwing himself into a carriage, accompanied by his confidential physician, Sir James Wyllie, he drove with the speed of lightning to the château; on arriving at which, and demanding entrance, he was ushered into a beautiful and exquisitely furnished apartment, reclining upon a couch in which lay the faded, yet still lovely, Empress Josephine!

A glance at once satisfied Sir James that all assistance was hopeless, (indeed she only survived till the next morning,) but the attentive and considerate kindness displayed by the amiable-minded Autocrat in the course of his visit so completely soothed the mind of the dying Empress, that, as a slight testimony of her regard, she begged his acceptance of all that the room (her own favourite boudoir) contained.

After her decease, these effects were care-

fully removed to St. Petersburg, and in the saloon where we were now assembled the whole were arranged exactly as at Malmaison. The paintings were most beautiful, and never, even in Italy, do I remember to have witnessed a collection of such choice and perfect gems of art.

I was still gazing upon a small but exquisitely-finished Madonna, a masterpiece from the hand of Guido, (and whose Madonnas are like his?) when a stir without announced the approach of the Imperial party, and almost the same moment the folding-doors at the extremity of the apartment were thrown open, and preceded respectively by a perfect squadron of chamberlains and demoiselles d'honneur, the former blazing with gold and embroidery, and the latter wearing the rich and singularly-pleasing Russian national costume, the Emperor and Empress entered.

Each, passing round the circle formed to receive them, entered into familiar conversation with every new arrival as he was presented by his respective Ambassador. I was

the only military stranger, and on my name being announced by Lord Clanricarde, was minutely questioned by His Imperial Majesty on a variety of points connected with the discipline and interior economy of the British and Indian Armies, in a manner which showed him well acquainted with both.

The Empress, mild, benignant, dignified, as the softened tones of her voice fell upon the stranger's ear, he could no longer wonder at the veneration her character and presence everywhere inspired, and which volumes could not tell so fully as the artless simple description of a beautiful English girl, who, constantly in the society of the Imperial family during their stay at Ems, exclaimed, "She was the most loveable being in the world."

On the breaking-up of the Court, I was overwhelmed with congratulations, and the highest degree of cordiality, by several persons whom till then I had never previously beheld, but who now reminded me of my having brought letters to them from their

various relatives in Moscow, and other parts of the Empire!—Whew—

> " 'Tis strange what a wonderful deal of éclat
> Is caused by the smile of the great Autocrat."

Of course, however, I did not fail to make suitable acknowledgments, and was leaving the room, when a stout, good-humoured looking gentleman accosted me with—

" His Imperial Majesty, sir, has commanded me to invite you to the ball this evening, for which a card will be immediately despatched to your hotel. Ahem! (and he glanced at my boots and pantaloons,) you are, of course, provided with the requisite costume?"

I was well aware to what costume he alluded, having been previously informed it was the etiquette of the Russian Court for all ranks and persons, with the exception of Lancers, Hussars, and Cossacks, to appear in that most uncomfortable of all branches of unmentionable wearing-apparel, familiarly denominated " cut-shorts!"

In answer, I begged to represent to the Great Chamberlain, (for it was no less a person who addressed me,) my extreme regret that wearing the appendages in question, however consonant to the forms and customs of the Russian Court, was strictly prohibited by the *code militaire* of the British Army.

"Oh! sir," replied my stout friend, "in that case it is unnecessary, as no infringement upon *military* rule is ever desired here."

On returning to my quarters I found my writing-table literally covered with invitations for balls, fêtes, and dinners innumerable, and Mrs. W—— herself, *in propriâ personâ*, superintending some alterations she had directed to be made in the sitting-room.

"Bless me, sir," was her opening salutation, "the servants say that all the great men of the place have been inquiring after you. I don't know much about that myself, but certainly two or three of them are the ugliest people I ever saw in my life!"

I could not refrain from smiling at my

respected friend's *extempore* essay upon the relative merits of personal attraction, but hinted, as the opinion in question, however true in the abstract, was not very generally conceived to be the most agreeable to the parties concerned, a little less candour, however reprehensible in some matters, would be highly advisable in this.

I dined in the evening with the family of my friend, Mr. L——, they having kindly volunteered to take me to the ball with them, and to which we drove at a somewhat early period.

It was now, indeed, that I had a full opportunity of observing the splendour of the Russian Court. In the morning, with the exception of our hurried passage through the grand reception-room, no opportunity for observation had occurred, excepting in the saloon of private *entrée;* now, however, the blaze of magnificence which burst upon the view was utterly beyond description, and rendered all that I had previously witnessed in the other Courts of Europe a mere baga-

telle in comparison: but if the rich paintings, the exquisite statuary, the innumerable works of the choicest vertu, in which the rarest malachite seemed as general as the most ordinary material in other lands, the costliest mirrors, columns, and ceilings, brilliant with all that taste could execute and wealth could command, if this united display, mingled with the gorgeous habits *de la cour*, superb uniforms, and various striking costumes, formed a picture dazzling and wonderful to the eye of a stranger, there was another circumstance still more striking, especially to an Englishman, remembering the ultra-stiff formality of his own Court, and that the one in which he stood was representative of the most absolute government in the world,—and this was the urbanity, kindness, and condescension of the Emperor, Empress, and the whole of the Imperial family, who, full of life and joyous spirit, with a smile, congratulation, and kindly welcome for every one, rendered the scene replete with gaiety and pleasure, and, in lieu of the rigid, I may almost say morose degree

of etiquette I had been led to expect, never do I remember to have witnessed, even in private life, a more perfect picture of freedom and amusement.

By the by, I may mention the evening enlightened me as to the cause of His Imperial Majesty's universal popularity with his lady subjects (that is, the younger part of them), since there he was, laughing, chatting, and doing the agreeable, beyond all competition, which, coming from a splendid figure, six feet two or three in height, decidedly the handsomest and most soldierlike-looking fellow in Europe, and Emperor of the Russias to boot, the effect may easily be conceived: indeed, to do him justice, a better judge of, and sharper eye for, a pretty face I never remember to have met with; and of the estimation in which he was held by the possessors of this very attractive and most essential feminine requisite, I was myself an example, from casually reverting to him with my fair partner, in the course of a waltz, by the familiar term of "My friend Nick," an abbreviation of ortho-

graphy, and His Imperial Majesty's cognomen at the same time, which elicited considerable indignation from "La belle Russe," but the which was most effectually removed when I mentioned that the observation in question, so far from being intended as offensive towards the Emperor, was expressive much more of hearty good-will and cordial feeling, we English being, as the world very well knew, such odd creatures, that rarely, if ever, was a favourite British sovereign, statesman, or commander, left without a peculiar sobriquet of some sort or other, the which, indeed, was a sure sign of the estimation in which he was held.

A slight incident at the conclusion of the waltz was the cause of much mirth in the immediate neighbourhood of where I stood.

"I say, my fine fellow," said a voice close to my elbow, and which came from as choice a specimen of a Muscovite giant as the eye would wish to rest upon, Colonel D——, of the Dragoons of the Guard, "I say, you seem very comfortable in your costume, there; I

wonder you were permitted to pass." And the gallant commander, throwing a glance upon his own huge supporters, encased in cut-shorts, according to rule,—an attire, I subsequently ascertained, he regarded with the utmost degree of aversion,—next cast his eyes with an envious gaze upon my own Netherlands attire. "Acting," he continued, "I suppose, upon the English principle of—Oh! oh! oh!"

This interjectional interruption proceeded from a practical illustration of the evils sometimes attending his own dress paraphernalia, and was caused by a sudden and untoward incident, occasioned by a young Cossack officer, evidently newly-caught in the Ukraine, and imported to the capital, who, whirling past in the waltz, brought the edge of his spur to bear pretty sharply upon the undefended extremities of the dragoon, who forthwith executed a variety of pirouettes and demivoltes, wholly independent of the music, absolutely astounding in a person of his colossal make and proportions.

"You may as well laugh outright," he said

savagely, "as stand there, with that hypocritical face of yours."

This observation, addressed to myself as the remote cause of his disaster, while struggling to maintain the requisite external degree of sympathizing concern, good breeding, and humanity, on such an occasion required, proved rather too much, not merely for my own gravity to sustain, but that of those around, a general peal of laughter following this wrathful ebullition of the discomfited dragoon, in which, a minute afterwards, he himself good-naturedly joined.

A few days after the ball I took the opportunity of going a round of the various palaces in the capital, the very gem of which, however, magnificent as the whole of them are, as I have previously mentioned, was destroyed by fire the year previous, and which I have heard those well qualified to judge assert could not be equalled by the united splendour of the rest of the Imperial residences, both in the environs of and in St. Petersburg itself.

Most providentially, nearly the whole of

its rich furniture, paintings, statuary, gorgeous armoury, &c., was with considerable difficulty preserved. Connected by enclosed galleries with this melancholy scene of ruined splendour are the palaces of the Great and Little Hermitage, in which, as I have already observed, the recent grand court fête was held. The extent of these superb edifices, running by the side of the Neva, including the private theatre, is rather more than a verst, or three-quarters of an English mile.

It is said, by foreign artists who have visited the Russian capital, that by far the best and completest collection of Wouvermans, Teniers, and even Spagnolettis, are found here, with upwards of twelve hundred other paintings of the first description, belonging to the Dutch, Spanish, and Italian schools.

One of the most remarkable, and indeed, in my estimation, equally beautiful (though by no means so grand and extensive), is the palace built expressly for and presented by the Empress Catherine to her lover and minister, the celebrated Prince Potemkin, and

which, though devastated, and all but destroyed, by the eccentric and capricious Paul, was subsequently renovated, and in a great measure restored, by the Emperor Alexander.

The gardens of the Chateau, converted by that crack-brained monarch into a riding-school for the cavalry, are perhaps the most singular the world ever witnessed, and far exceed any fabled description of beauty and wonder the imagination of the poet or painter has either attempted or portrayed, since by means of concealed flues and stoves in the midst of a city buried in frost and snow, the stranger may here wander through walks perfumed by the fragrance of the blossoms of the citron, the lime, and the orange, while myrtles, geraniums, and roses, lead him momentarily to suppose that he has exchanged the dreary banks of the Neva in the month of December, for the sunny stream of the Guadalquiver, in the heavenly period of its early spring.

About twelve miles from St. Petersburg is the beautiful pavilion-palace of Czarskoezelo, the favourite residence of Catherine II., and

the seat of her voluptuous pleasures. I can offer no description of the grounds, but I have been told in summer they are pre-eminently beautiful, and the general effect equally singular as pleasing, from the Turkish kiosks, Chinese pagodas, arches, grottoes, and Grecian temples scattered through them.

One room in the palace possesses a melancholy interest in the estimation of the stranger; this is the favourite apartment of the late Emperor Alexander, in which everything remains as he left it on his departure for Taganrog, from whence he was never to return. His hat and gloves lay on the table, and all wore the appearance of the tenant of the chamber being merely momentarily absent.

Strange and unaccountable is that presentiment of approaching evil which oppresses and subdues sometimes even the most powerful minds.

The morning of his quitting the capital, the Emperor, exhilarated with the prospect of the journey, was remarked to be in higher spirits than he had manifested for many months past

by his suite and attendants, one of whom, approaching him, requested his orders on some subject against his return.

The word seemed to fall on his ear with the shock of a thunderbolt.

"Return!" he said, with melancholy bitterness — "I shall never revisit Czarskoezelo again." Too truly, indeed, was his foreboding verified.

The bedchamber of Catherine, which also remained untouched since her death, is furnished with all the rich and luxurious elegance for which she was so celebrated: the walls are of fine porcelain; and close by the bedside is an admirably concealed door. ("Oh, my!" as Mrs. Trollope's young American ladies would exclaim.) Hold your tongue, sir, and be d—d to you! Do you suppose the veriest greenhorn in the world cannot understand *for what purpose* it was intended, without your unmannerly interpretation? These rascally servants will do anything but shut their eyes, as they ought, and pretend to do, and not trouble their heads about their ladies' actions.

Czarskoezelo was also the favourite residence of Orloff in the zenith of his fame and power; and it was here occurred that last, sad, melancholy incident of his life in public.

He had married the young, the beautiful, and amiable Countess Zinowieff, to whom he was devotedly and passionately attached, and in whose society perhaps the short fleeting period of real happiness he ever knew was experienced. In the bloom of life and health, and within a few months after their union, she was suddenly carried off, and laid in her early grave, a stroke of misfortune so sudden and severe, that the mind of her unhappy husband gave way beneath it.

No one from that moment was admitted to his presence, except one or two confidential domestics; he ate of what they placed before him, and then either sat or reclined in listless apathy, not a tear or moan escaping him; or passed the time in vacantly wandering from one rich suite of apartments to another of his gorgeous and miserable home, as if in search of the lost and loved one, whose radiant beauty

and angelic sweetness had so recently shone, diffusive of every earthly happiness, where all now was darkness, gloom, and wretchedness.

At length, by the instigation of an acute and intelligent physician, he was prevailed upon to leave St. Petersburg, and proceed upon a lengthened course of travel; from which period, till upwards of two years afterwards, no tidings were heard of him beyond his being engaged in one incessant change of movement from one country to another.

One night, about this time, the château of Czarskoezelo was the scene of one of those select, gay, and brilliant soirées in which the Empress took so much pleasure. Never had she appeared in her best days, though now past the bloom of life, more strikingly handsome, or more replete with happiness, as she promenaded the ball-room, her arm resting upon that of a pale, stripling, elegant form, in a rich hussar uniform, upon whose feminine beauty of feature and countenance her eyes were fixed with looks of the deepest and fondest love and devotion.

It was the *fair-haired Lanskoi*, the *one sole* being she ever regarded with true affection, whose early and untimely death from decline, crushing and overwhelming with the deepest affliction the heart of the ambitious sovereign, the artful and intriguing ruler of an equally unscrupulous and unprincipled period, added one more to the many examples of — what a riddle is woman!

Mirth and gladness were at the highest, the ball proceeded merrily, when a tall, powerful, gentlemanly man, on whose noble and dignified features either disease or the acutest mental misery, or perhaps both, had impressed a paleness so livid and wasted as rendered his countenance scarcely human, suddenly entered the room. As if in defiance of court etiquette, and derision of the gorgeous costumes around him, he was attired in a suit of the deepest mourning; but on his broad and muscular chest glittered, set in the choicest brilliants, the insignia of the most illustrious Orders of Knighthood in Europe.

It was Orloff! He strode into the middle

of the assembly, till he reached the spot where the Empress stood.

"You are gay to-night, Katerina," he said, with a maniac laugh; "how happy everything seems around you!" Then, changing his tone, he added, in a voice of thunder and ferocity of manner that startled even the boldest heart present, "How dare you be dancing and enjoying yourselves, and my poor wife not cold in her grave!"

Pale and agitated for several moments, the Empress vainly struggled to give utterance to the words, "Good God! Orloff, are you mad?"

"Mad!" he exclaimed, in that low, deep, stern tone of intense passion so frightful to hear, as slowly he raised and menacingly held his finger towards her. "Mad! ay, and *who* made me so? through whom did I become a murderer and a regicide?"

Catherine now shook so violently, that her favourite was obliged to cast his arm around her waist to sustain her; but, equally alarmed at the fearful degree of agitation which possessed her, and the threatening aspect of Orloff,

while even some of the boldest veterans of the great Souvaroff stood by paralyzed and confounded, the noble youth, placing himself as a shield before the Empress, and, resigning her to the care of her trembling *demoiselles d'honneur*, advanced and confronted the giant.

"Boy," said Orloff, contemptuously extending an arm in muscular strength and proportion rivalling that of the Hercules Farnese, and which most certainly would have crushed the elegant form of the favourite to death at a single blow, "boy, I wish not to harm you, yet come not near me, stand aside, and let me once more gaze upon *her* who has alike been the cause of my glory and my guilt."

The fierce tones of his deep and powerful voice became wholly changed and subdued, as he uttered the conclusion of the sentence; sadly and mournfully they struck upon the ear. The exciting energy of the moment was past; he gazed with pity and affection upon his sovereign and mistress as, sinking upon an adjoining ottoman, that last resource and relief of the hopelessly miserable, the intensely wretched,

(whose unutterable agony of mind has been occasioned by their own guilt, vice, or folly), in its weakness overcame him, and he wept—the iron-nerved soldier, the unscrupulous votary of ambition, that man of blood, the regicide, wept—wept like a child.

He became insensible the next minute, and was borne from the room to his own mansion, at which he had only arrived that evening from abroad, when, hearing of the Empress's intended fête, he ordered his carriage, and set off to the palace.

He lingered but a short time afterwards, his mind never recovering the shock it had sustained in the stroke which, bereaving him of the only tie which bound him to existence, bore the semblance of that retributive justice of that unseen Power, whose sentence may, for purposes of its own, perhaps be stayed, but yet as surely and unerringly one day falls.

The presentation to the Emperor was followed a week afterwards by a similar ceremony to the Grand Duke Michael, whose newly-erected palace is considered as carrying

the palm in architectural beauty from all the splendid mansions in the capital, not even excepting the far-famed Winter Palace itself.

On arriving, we ascertained that our own party, consisting of the gentlemen of Lord Clanricarde's Embassy and myself, were the only persons to be introduced on the occasion; and, having been shown into an anteroom, notification of our presence was immediately forwarded to the Grand Duke.

The apartment into which we were ushered was certainly adapted to fill a stranger with curiosity and astonishment. Had I not been aware of the locale in which I stood, I should at the moment have supposed I had stumbled upon the well-furnished orderly room of an enthusiastically zealous commander of one of the regiments of the Imperial Guard, instead of what we were given to understand it actually was—the private sitting-room of the Prince himself.

The walls were hung with pictures in plain wood frames, representing soldiers in every position, performing the various movements of the manual, platoon, lance, and sword

exercise. In one corner was a camp couch, or bedstead, with a mattress about as soft and pliant as the beautifully-polished boards on which we were treading, while on a plain table, (which, with a few chairs, formed the entire of the rest of the furniture,) were several works, which, from their figure and appearance, I could have sworn at a glance were General Orders, Army Regulations, Field Exercise, and all that sort of thing.

By the time I had finished my survey, we were summoned up-stairs, and in a small withdrawing-room, the splendour and rich paraphernalia of which formed a singular contrast to the one we had just quitted, found the Grand Duke waiting to receive us.

After some conversation of a general nature, he turned to me, and commenced such a sharp cross-examination relative to the drill, discipline, manœuvres, rewards, periods of service, &c., of the British and Anglo-Indian armies, that I had reason to congratulate myself upon being an old Adjutant, but for which circumstance I must, to a certainty,

have been floored, the more especially since it was very easy to perceive, that my Imperial catechist was as fully *au fait* to the subject, (as indeed to what army in the world is he not?) as myself.

On concluding, he bowed to us and retired, his departure being almost immediately followed by the entrance of the Grand Duchess Helen, who, in the ordinary and commonplace parlance of a mere formal interview, contrived to impress upon us the conviction, as to how well-merited is the opinion universally entertained of her popularity, with all classes in St. Petersburg.

Indeed, some peculiar good fortune seems to have attended the whole of the present princes of the House of Romanoff, in their selections for domestic life, since, however loved and esteemed in their own native faderland, their being transplanted to the frozen regions of the North has but rendered their virtues and amiable qualities the more highly venerated and appreciated, by those among whom their future destiny in life has been cast.

I was engaged to dine this evening with Mr. Plinkey at the English Club, so termed from having originally been founded by our countrymen, where the members have the privilege of inviting non-resident foreigners, and which institution, (flattering and complimentary distinction to British honour and integrity,) bears on its records this first rule, that its treasurers and secretaries shall always be Englishmen.

The occasion of my present visit there was attended by an incident equally annoying as ridiculous. I had called a drotchsky for the purpose of proceeding, and having put the usual query to the asvoshtikh, or driver, as to whether he was acquainted with the locale in question, and being very confidently answered in the affirmative, I jumped in, and we set off.

After flying about for the period of nearly half an hour, the coachman suddenly stopped, and, turning round, very candidly confessed his ignorance of the place I wished to proceed to, recommended my getting into another

conveyance, of which several were at hand, and paying him for the drive with which he had accommodated me.

I willingly acceded to the first part of his proposition, but signified a most emphatic negative relative to the latter; as, however, I was preparing to take my seat in the other drotchsky, which had drawn up beside me, the driver of the one I had previously engaged placed himself before me, expressing his intention not to permit my departure, if his claim was not previously satisfied.

Oh! how bitterly did I regret my ill fortune in being in plain clothes, since the very sight of the cocked hat and epaulettes would not merely have settled the question at once, but have consigned my friend to the nearest guard-house, where he would have been pretty summarily and strongly advised in a manner he was not likely easily to forget, as to his future conduct, before he was liberated. In the mean time, attracted by the dispute, the crowd gathered around us, and, learning what had occurred, immediately took the part of

the stranger; one of them, a well-dressed, and, I should say, an opulent burgher, advancing towards and accosting me in French, politely offered his services and assistance in any way they could be available, at the same time soliciting to know whom he had the honour of addressing.

My information, relative to the latter part of his request, elicited a stare of incredulous astonishment, as he sceptically remarked, "An English Colonel! then pray, sir, may I ask what you do in this dress, and where is your uniform?"

In reply, I could only inform him that, in my own country, it was not customary for officers to be clad in harness at all, unless upon duty, or with their regiments; and that even in private society in his own capital, it was not expected of foreign officers to appear so, unless on occasions where any members of the Imperial family were present.[1]

[1] Russian military officers are, however, very reluctant to see their guests otherwise than in uniform, and are very desirous of their never appearing in public in any other costume.

He was satisfied with the explanation, and, turning to the driver, commenced lavishing upon him every term of opprobrium, (and a Russian generally thinks of a good many,) for his gross violation of the laws of hospitality, and imposition upon a stranger, in which interlocutory exercise he was zealously and ably seconded by the mob.

Such a clamour and medley of tongues the world never witnessed; but the rascal stuck to his point, and never let go his hold upon my cloak; his lungs were as strong as any of his opponents, and he bawled as loud as the best of them; the annunciation of my rank too, which was made with all due pomp and emphasis to frighten him, was productive of quite the reverse, being received with a grin of derision, as, pointing to my unhappy bourgeois dress, he jeeringly inquired if *that* was a Colonel's uniform.

I was more than half inclined to have recourse to the "argumentum ad hominem,"— the fist was clinched, the arm upraised, when prudence suggested such a proceeding was

calculated to be productive of considerable mischief, and might even convert my present warm supporters into as bitter enemies, Russian warfare on these occasions being invariably confined to the tongue.

In the mean time it began to snow, then it began to blow, and as a natural consequence the snow began to drift, at first slowly, and then most furiously, while visions of snug fires, comfortable dinners, and their various agreeable concomitants, as if in mockery, rose before my irritated imagination, to suggest the necessity of getting away from my present predicament under any circumstances.

Swallowing my indignation, therefore, as I best could, I at once announced my willingness to pay the man's demand, an intimation, however, so far from settling the question, only rendered it more uproarious than ever, since, received with dissent and disapprobation by my own followers, it served but to strengthen the supposition of the driver that he would get his money, and consequently

rendered him the more determined upon asserting his claim.

In the interim, the drift was every moment increasing, and driven to desperation by cold and hunger, as seizing my French-speaking follower by the arm, I exclaimed, " My very kind and excellent friend,"—here came full but upon my face such a burst of the drift, that it seemed actually as if a huge snowball the size of, and hurled with the force of a 64-pounder, had come in contact with it. Half-choked and blinded, it may easily be supposed my eloquence was very effectually checked by the disagreeable interpolation.

After no little exertion, I at length succeeded in obtaining a hearing; and through the medium of my interpreter, eulogizing their zeal on my behalf to the skies, but mentioning that I was keeping a large circle of friends waiting (a most imaginative and theoretical reasoning, as, alas! I knew too well the Club waited dinner for no one, whether King or Kaisar,) begged the favour of being permitted to do what I pleased.

This produced some effect; and, after a little farther parlance, engendered by the inquiry as to what was the actual fare between my residence and the Club, on discharging this, (the amount being somewhat less than a shilling,) for not a fraction more would they permit the fellow to receive, we were each permitted to wend our different ways.

On joining my friends, I found dinner half over; but, perfectly famished as I was, this was an affair of very little moment, and with a hurried apology for my absence, I fell to with hearty good-will; and it was only on the removal of the cloth, while sipping our wine, that I related the cause of my detention, much mirth being elicited by the recital; several of the *militaires*, however, intimating at its conclusion, they trusted the circumstance would act as a preventive against my moving out in future otherwise than *en tenue*.

I have subsequently more than once thought of this trivial adventure; and although I must

candidly confess, in the impatience and irritation of the moment, I wished my friends at the devil for their officious kindness, it has struck me as a characteristic trait highly honourable in the Russian middle or lower orders, so different to what I have observed in other countries, their thus warmly espousing the cause of a stranger as they did on this occasion.

I was in the full run of all the gaieties of the season; and in St. Petersburg in the winter they are not a few, when all my prospective visions of fun and frolic, balls, routs, assemblées, and ballets, came to a conclusion as summary as it was unexpected, by an order from home to the Ambassador, directing me to proceed forthwith to Berlin, and thence to England.

'Slife! here was a change! "When was I to start?"

"Oh! you have plenty of time to get ready; the courier does not leave till to-morrow at daylight." (It was then about four o'clock, p. m.)

"But my passport! the office is closed by this, and—"

"It has already been sent for, and will be here immediately."

"But the usual advertisement of three successive weeks—"

"I'll see to this."

"Reporting my departure—"

"I'll take care of that."

It was, in fact, no go, all my excuses to obtain a respite having already been met, and anticipated. Talk of a Quartermaster-General! an Ambassador is worth the whole Corps d'Etat-Major.

There was no help for it; I rushed from the Embassy to the English Magazine, for, wholly unprepared for such a sudden emergency, like most persons in similar cases, I had every thing to procure; thanks, however, to the active exertions of my friend Mr. Colquhoun, every thing was obtained, packed, and stowed away; and the following morning, cloaked, furred, and shawled, I mounted the britzska, and having taken my leave of

the great northern metropolis, was occupied the next fortnight *en route* to Berlin, in dashing through apparently trackless wastes of snow, at a rate, the rapidity of which only those who have travelled as a Russian courier can either appreciate or understand.

THE END.

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